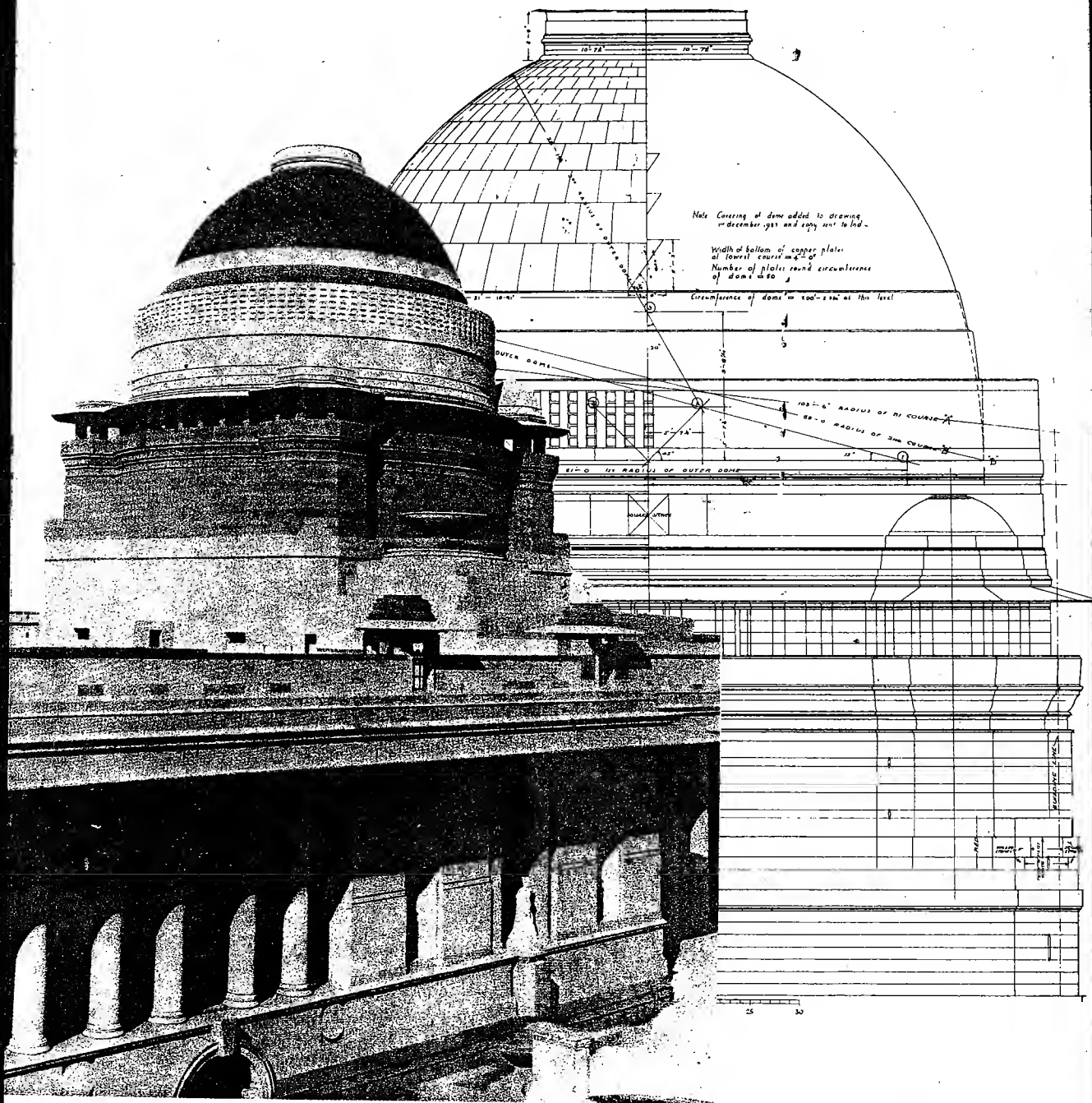


NEW DELHI

ROBERT BYRON



IN VIEW OF THE INDIAN ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE NOW CONVENED
IN LONDON, THIS ISSUE OF THE REVIEW IS DEVOTED TO A STUDY OF
THE NEW CAPITAL OF INDIA, WHICH IS TO BE OFFICIALLY
OPENED IN FEBRUARY

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THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration



NEW DELHI

Gules semeé of Lotus flowers Argent
an Elephant
equipped for Ceremony Or

Two Shillings and Sixpence Net.

9 Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster, S.W.1.

Vol. LXIX

January 1931

No. 410

THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

A Magazine of Architecture & Decoration

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By Robert Byron.

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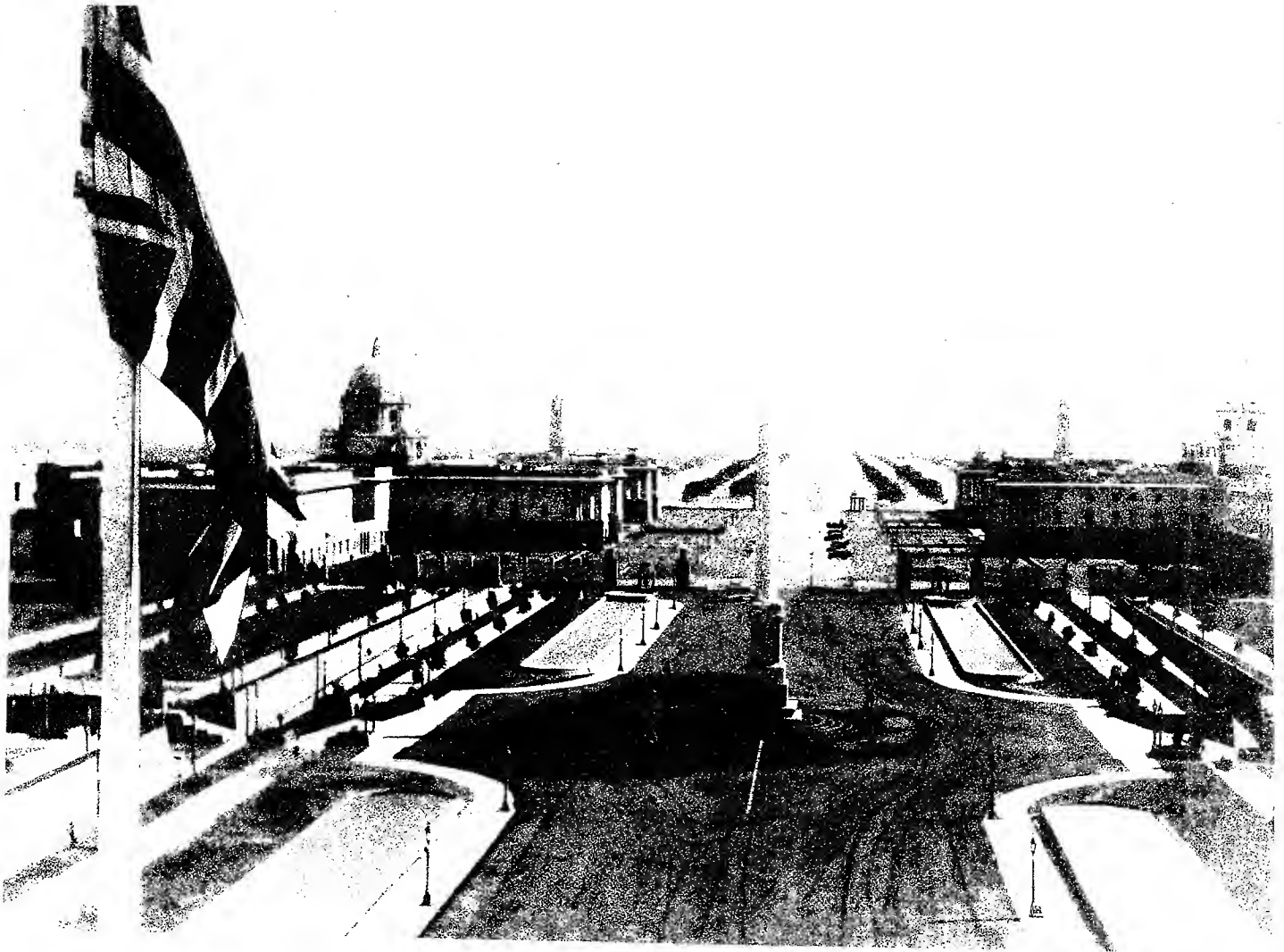


Plate I.

January 1931.

New Delhi ; Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Herbert Baker, Associated Architects. This view of the general lay-out of the city is taken from the dome of the Viceroy's House. In the foreground is the Viceroy's Court, containing the Jaipur column, which will be completed by a bronze extension and glass star, adding in all another forty feet to its height. Beyond are the two Secretariats, each with dome and tower. In the distance can be seen the King's Way and waterways, and the Memorial Arch on the horizon.

[NOTE.—In view of the Indian Round Table Conference now convened in London, this issue of the REVIEW is devoted to a study of the new capital of India, which is to be officially opened in February. The whole of the letterpress, photographs, and criticisms, has been contributed by Mr. Robert Byron.]

New Delhi.

By Robert Byron.

I.—The First Impression.

I.—*Preconceptions.*

THAT New Delhi exists, and that, twenty years ago, it did not exist, are facts known to anyone who is at all aware of the British connection with India. It is expected, and assumed, that the representatives of British sovereignty beyond the seas shall move in a setting of proper magnificence; and that in India, particularly, the temporal power shall be hedged with the divinity of earthly splendour. To satisfy this expectation, New Delhi was designed and created. But that the city's existence marks, besides an advance in the political unification of India, a notable artistic event, has scarcely been realized. Nor is this surprising in a generation which has been taught by painful experience to believe architectural splendour and gaiety inseparable from vulgarity. Of the city's permanent value as an æsthetic monument, posterity must be the final judge. But to contemporaries, and in the darkness of contemporary standards, the event shines with a Periclean importance.

The surprise which awaits the traveller on his first view of the imperial capital will be proportionate to the fixity of his previous ideas about it. Primarily, his conception has been political. The very words "New Delhi" suggest a Canberra in Asia, a hiving of black-coated officials in a maze of offices. True, there have been photographs; but these have been either of the worse buildings, which were finished first, or, if of the better, of structures in disarray, confused with scaffolding, and offset by no proper lay-out. Nor can, nor ever will, any photograph convey the colour of the scheme and the part played by colour in the unity and proportion of the architecture. Again, the traveller may already have assessed the worth of the architects from their buildings in London. He may have recalled Britannic House at Finsbury Circus, the little bank abutting on St. James's, Piccadilly, and the cenotaph in Whitehall, from the hand of Sir Edwin Lutyens; together with the Ninth Church of Christ Scientist, India House, and the new Bank of England, from that of Sir Herbert Baker. And he must confess that, whatever the merits of these buildings compared

with those around them, judged by universal standards they display little distinction and no genius. Finally, before he reaches Delhi, the traveller must necessarily have observed the scale and variety already employed by English enterprise to embellish the chief towns of India; and he must have found himself, in the process, not merely depressed, but tempted to regret our nation's very existence. For it has been our misfortune to have impressed on the length and breadth of the country an architectural taste whose origin coincided with the sudden and complete enslavement of European æsthetics to the whims of literary and romantic symbolism. The nineteenth century devised nothing lower than the municipal buildings of British India. Their ugliness is positive, dæmonic. The traveller feels that the English have set the mark of the beast on a land full of artistry and good example. Here and there, in the large commercial towns, a new dawn is breaking. But the traveller remembers anxiously that the greater part of New Delhi was designed before the War. Only in the unremitting abuse lavished on the new city by resident Englishmen and occidentalized Indians does a perverse hope seem to linger.

2.—*The Reality.*

With sad expectations, therefore, the traveller hires a motor, and drives out of Old Delhi, past the Pearl Mosque and the Fort. Dipping beneath a pleasant Neo-Georgian railway bridge, he debouches on an arterial vista of asphalt and lamp-posts. A flat country—brown, scrubby, and broken, over which the cold winds of the central Indian winter sweep their arctic rigours—lies on either side. This country has been compared with the Roman Campagna: at every hand, tombs and mosques from Mogul times and earlier, weathered to the colour of the earth, bear witness to former empires. The road describes a curve—the curve of a solar railway; and embarks imperceptibly on a gradient. Suddenly, on the right, a scape of towers and domes is lifted from the horizon, sunlit pink and cream against the dancing blue sky, fresh as a cup of milk, grand as Rome. Close at hand, the foreground discloses a white arch, a fabric replete

NEW DELHI.

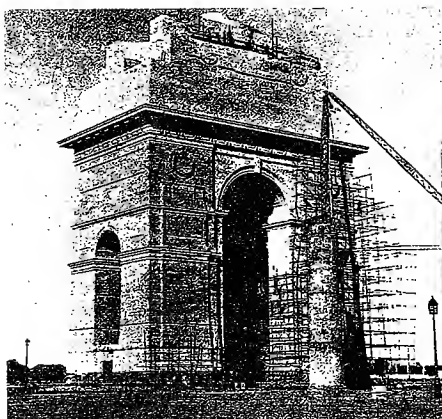


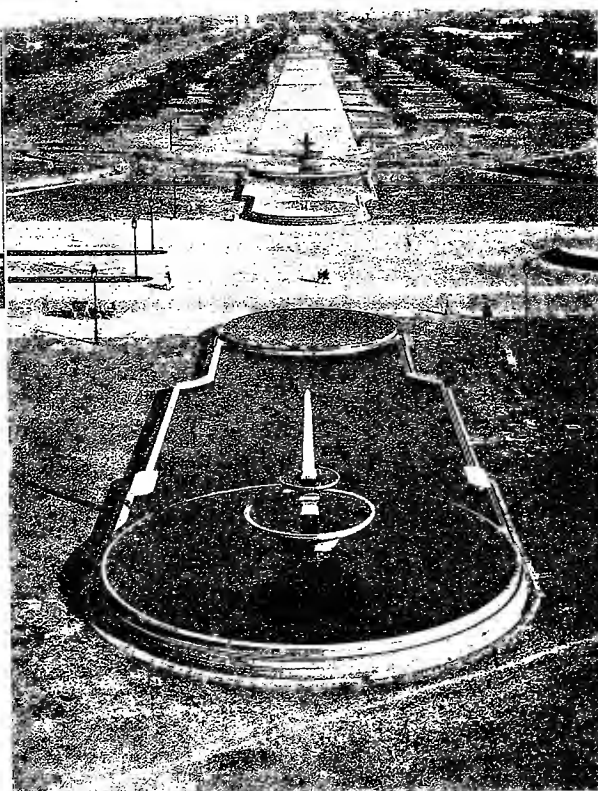
FIG. 1.—The *ALL-INDIA MEMORIAL ARCH*, by Sir Edwin Lutyens, with its scaffolding and workmen. The brick pillars in the foreground, for the cranes, have been removed.

with stone, whose height exceeds that of the new Underground Building in London by three feet. This is the threshold of the city. The motor turns off the arterial avenue, and, skirting the low red base of this gigantic monument, comes to a stop. The traveller heaves a breath. Before his eyes, sloping gently upward, runs a gravel way of such infinite perspective as to suggest the intervention of a diminishing-glass; at whose end, reared above the green tree-tops, glitters the seat of government, the seventh Delhi, four-square upon an eminence—dome, tower, dome, tower, dome, red, pink, cream, and white, washed gold and flashing in the morning sun. The traveller looses a breath, and with it his apprehensions and preconceptions. Here is something not merely worthy, but whose like has never been. With a shiver of impatience he shakes off contemporary standards, and makes ready to evoke those of Greece, the Renaissance, and the Moguls.

The motor moves forward again. Beside the arch lie circular basins of water. In front, on either side of the gravelled way, run strips of park, grass, and trees, to the width of 189 yards each. The trees disclose gleams of other waters. These are water-ways, connecting with the basins by the arch, and continuing parallel with the central drive as far as the Great Place, a distance of a mile and a quarter. This central drive is known as the King's Way. Up it the tall black lamp-posts still persist. Half way is a crossing road, off which, to the right, stand the façade and half a side of the Record Office. But there is no time to turn the head. The central group at the end begins to reveal itself; and with every detail its enigma and grandeur increase.

The eminence on which it stands, once known as the Raisina Hill, has been invested, from in front, with an artificial character by foundation walls of rich rhubarb stone; so that, from having been a gentle rise in the ground, it now pretends to the illusion of a portentous feat of building, as

FIG. 2.—Two *FOUNTAINS* photographed from the tower of the South Secretariat. Beyond are the King's Way, the south waterway, and the Memorial Arch. The edge of the third fountain of the group can be seen on the right.



though its entire area, half a mile across, had been raised above the surrounding country by human effort. From this massive undercarriage rise the end-façades of the two Secretariats, red to the first storey, white above. At either corner of each façade project pillared extensions, throwing heavy triangular shadows on the intervening walls (Fig. 3 and Plate II). These shadows give depth and solidity to the buildings, and increase their character of entrance-lodges, on a huge scale, to the steeply rising roadway in between them. Over the centre of each façade stands a slender white tower; while from the central point of each whole building, a considerable way back, rise two companion domes of cream stone, set on tall bases of the same material picked out in red. These domes, surmounted each by a cupola, are shaped like those of St. Peter's and St. Paul's, after the fashion of the High Renaissance. From the cross-roads on the King's Way they stand up outside, though lower than, the towers in front. Then, as the motor draws on, they gradually move inward, till the towers cut across them, and at length they reappear, diminished in height, on the inside.

The Secretariats, however, are but the ancillaries of a

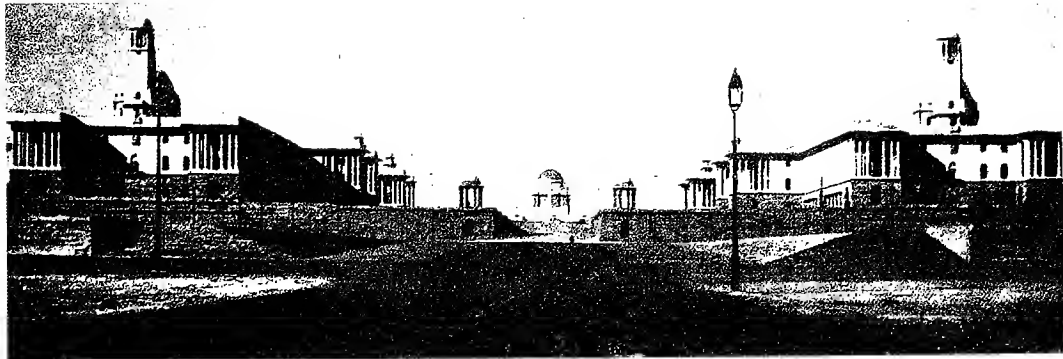


FIG. 3

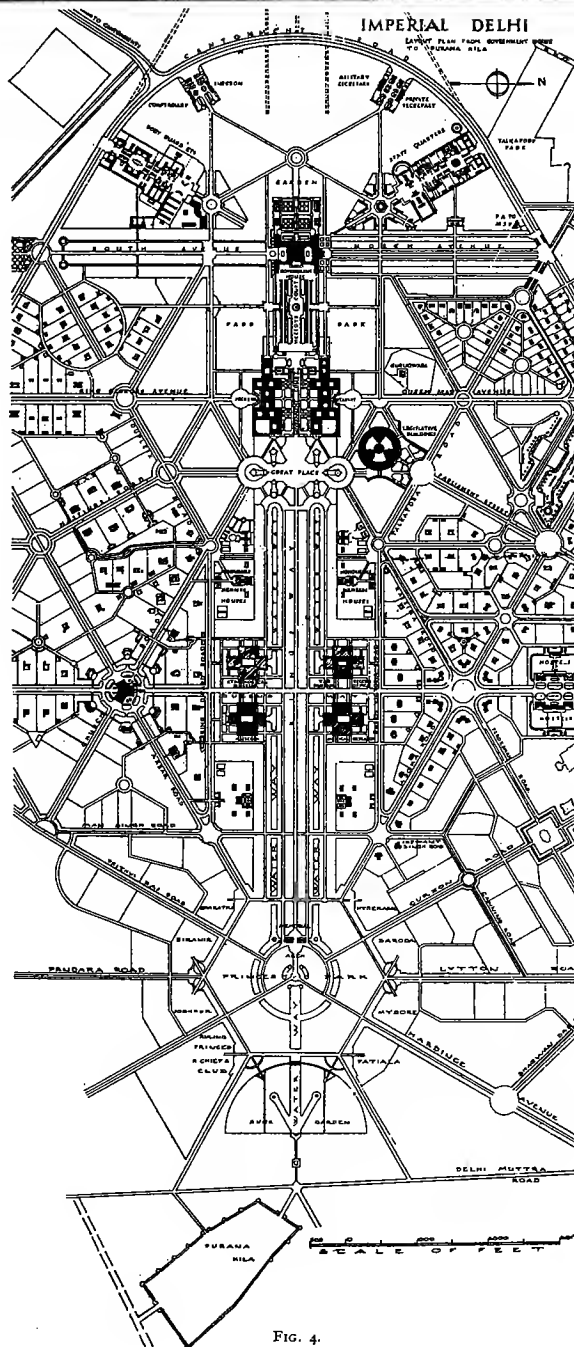


FIG. 4.

FIG. 3.—A general view looking up the King's Way towards THE SECRETARIATS and the VICEROY'S HOUSE, the dome of which can be seen in the

A 2

3

centre. In this view the towers of the Secretariats cut across the domes. FIG. 4.—The PLAN shows the lay-out of the central buildings and their surroundings.

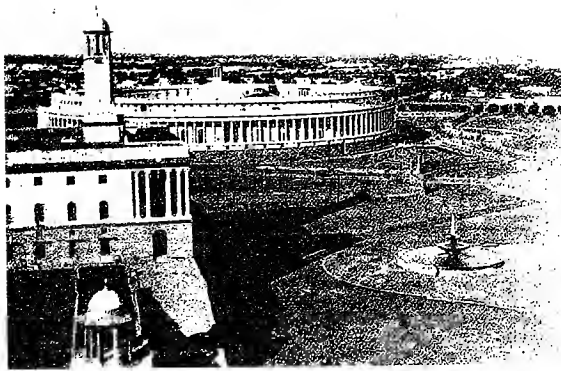


FIG. 5.—THE COUNCIL CHAMBER from the tower of the South Secretariat. The shopping quarter of New Delhi, and also old Delhi, are seen in the distance.

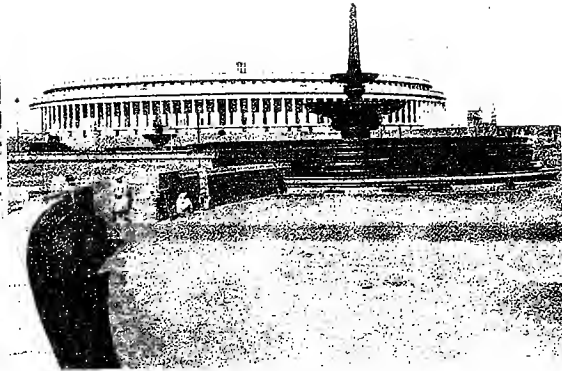


FIG. 6.—Another view of THE COUNCIL CHAMBER with a fountain in the foreground.

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Plate II.

January 1931.

The entrance front of the North Secretariat, showing the dome and two of the four pillared extensions with their shadows. In front the central way rises from its trough.

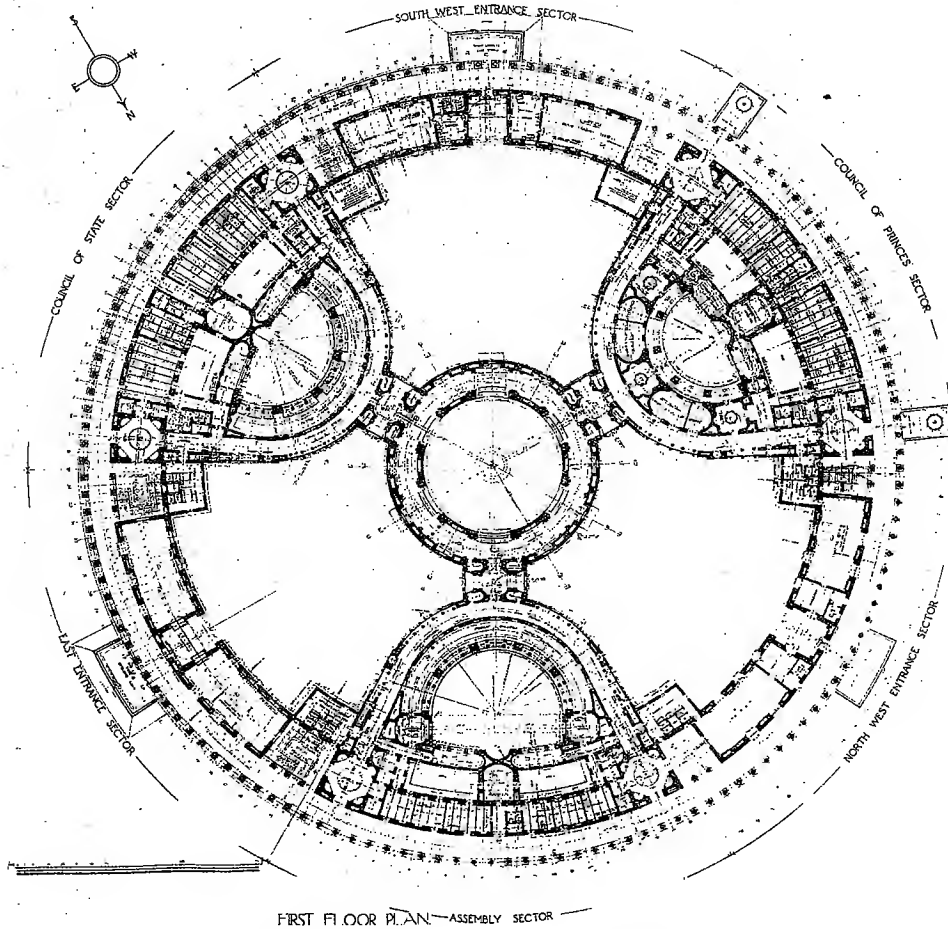


FIG. 7.—The first-floor plan of THE COUNCIL CHAMBER. Sir Herbert Baker, Architect.



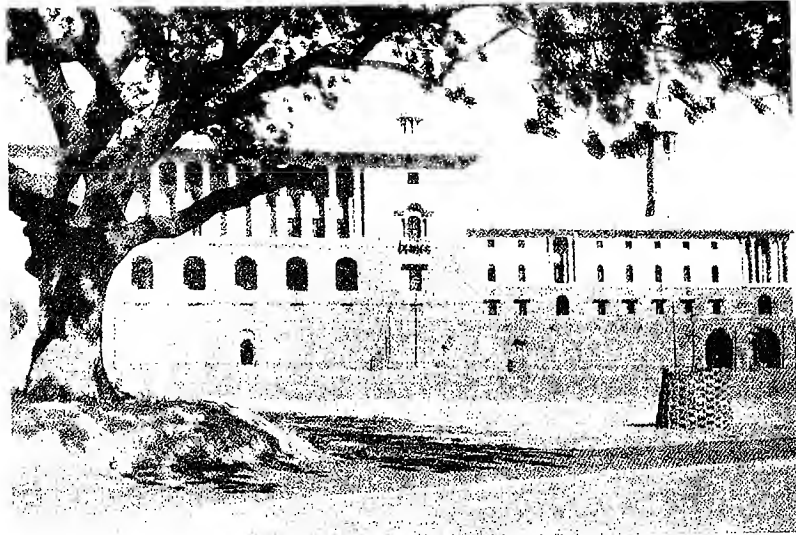


FIG. 8.—The back of the SOUTH SECRETARIAT showing the south block which looks toward the Q'tab. FIG. 9.—Plans of the SECRETARIATS.

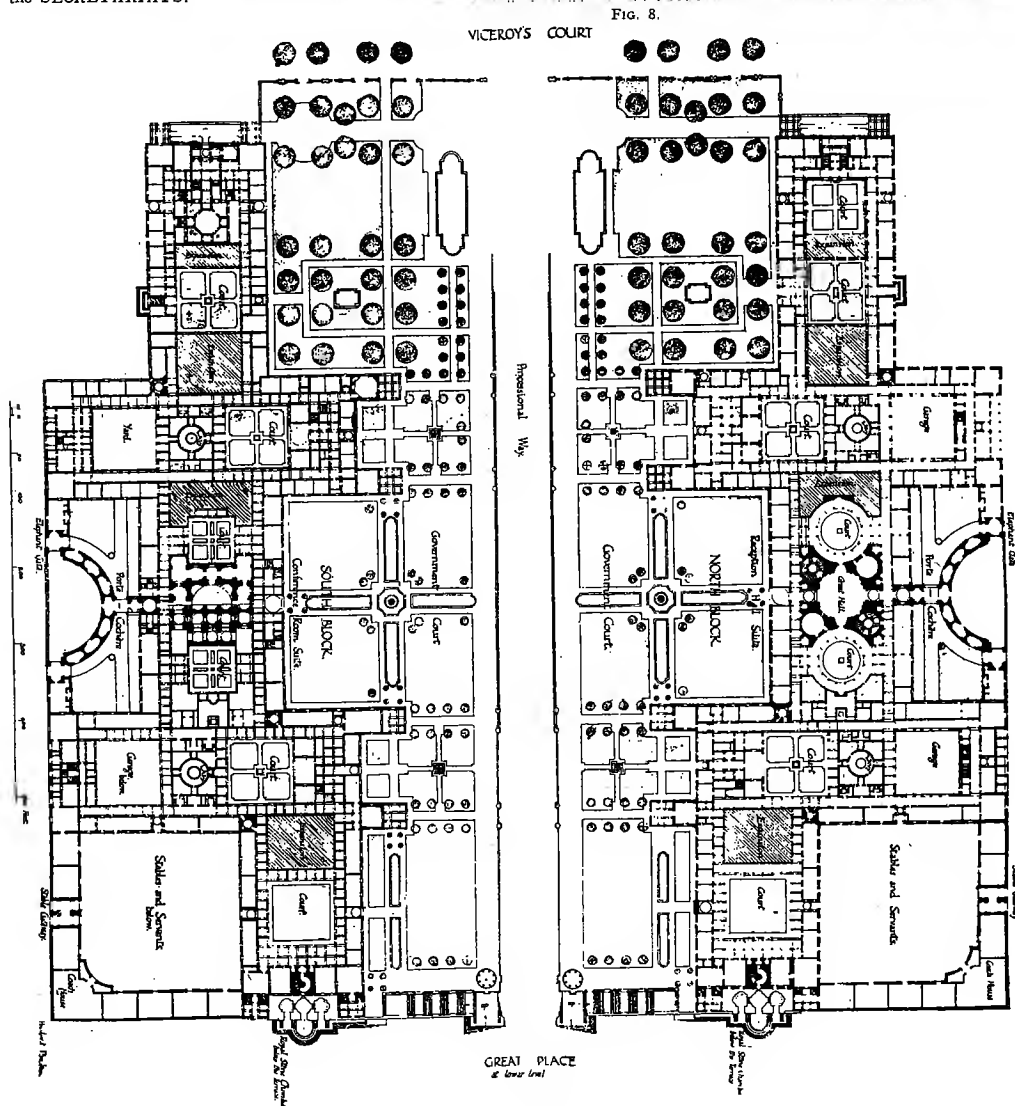


FIG. 9.
5

pivotal and more distinguished monument. For nearly 400 yards along the same, though now uplifted, axis as the King's Way, their main bulks face one another, 117 yards apart, and separated by invisible platforms, through which runs a broad gradient of asphalt in a red stone trough. At the top of this gradient, though evidently very distant, stands a column of white marble, suggesting the intervening level. And beyond this again appears another central dome, upheld, right and left, by a stupendous white colonnade, a furlong and a half in length, whose total extent is cut short by the converging perspective of the Secretariats.

This dome, a flat hemisphere of glistening metal supported on a great red and white plinth three times its depth and half again as deep as its own diameter, seems impervious to the laws of distance. From the middle of the King's Way it appears to be neither behind the Secretariats nor in front of them (Fig. 3). Enough that, in a symmetrical plan, it lies between them. For its character is so arresting, so unprecedented, so uninviting of comparison with known architecture, that, like a sovereign crowned and throned, it subordinates everything within view to increase its own state, and stands not to be judged by, but to judge, its attendants. The Secretariats, remarkable buildings in themselves, exist only in relation to it, and inasmuch as they minister to its success. Its individuality, its difference from every dome since the Pantheon and particularly from the domes adjoining, lies in its intrinsic solidity. It has the character of a pure monument. Encircled with a narrow gallery, whose function is only to provide, by its blind shadow, a black and further solidifying variant to the red and white, it seems not to have been built, but to have been poured compact from a mould, impermeable to age, destined to stand for ever, to watch the rise of an eighth Delhi and a hundredth Delhi. Let the breath of destruction threaten all around; this it cannot penetrate. Such an expression of irrefragable permanence, of the monumental function transcending all considerations of adornment or utility, recalls the architectural intentions of Antiquity, of Egypt, Babylon, and Persia, and alone makes the first drive up the King's Way an experience of instant and increasing pleasure.

As the motor approaches the Great Place, the colonnade beneath the dome gradually sinks below the level of the Secretariats' platforms; so that the monument stands by itself, appearing to rise off the top of the asphalt gradient between them. It has receded now. Its top has sunk below the roof-line of the Secretariats. But the marble column stands out in front, to indicate the extent, half a mile in length, of the intermediate distance.

The pure whiteness of this column contrasts with the sand-stone cream of the Secretariats and of the dome behind it, and still more with the burnt rosy red of their foundations and the dome's gallery. These two sandstones, employed in all the chief buildings of New Delhi, have come from the same quarry. The contrast between them is intense; in fact the degree of this intensity has played an important part in determining the proportion of foundation to upper storey, and in reducing the weapons of architectural definition and emphasis to a minimum, throughout the city. But at the same time there is none of that glaring disunity displayed by Mogul buildings, where white marble of an entirely separate patina and luminosity is employed with the same red stone. For in New Delhi, the red and cream,

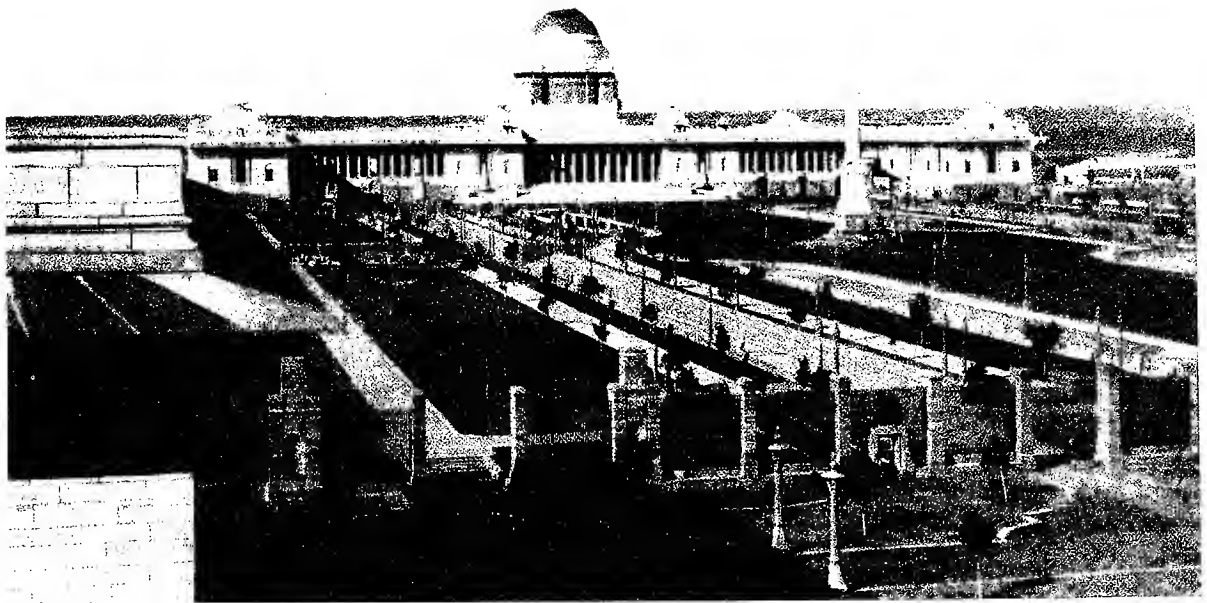
being of the same texture, and each containing the tints of the other, seem to grow into one another, as they did in the earth. In Mogul buildings, the marble becomes simply an electric decoration, an exquisite appliance. Here, the light is absorbed and refracted equally by both stones, and every building shares to some extent the quality of the central dome—as though it had been poured liquid from a mould and as though the red, being heavier, had sunk to the bottom. In both colours the stone has an exquisite freshness, bathing in light like the petals of a flower in dew. At the same time, the essential affinity of the two colours produces an air of strength and maturity, which attains, on a sufficient scale, to grandeur.

A mile and a quarter from the Arch, two low triangular flights of steps on either side of the King's Way mark the rise to the Great Place, a rectangle with elliptical ends (Fig. 4), $26\frac{1}{2}$ acres in extent, and lying across the axis of the main design. The middle is empty, save for the necessary traffic islands; so that nothing interrupts the view of the gradient between the Secretariats and the central dome above it. But at either end of the Place are set three fountains, each 240 feet in length and consisting of two circular sheets of water joined by an oblong on a slightly lower level (Fig. 2). In each of these triple groups, the fountains are set at right-angles to one another, the centre one laterally, pointing outwards along the length of the Great Place, the other two parallel with the King's Way and exactly in line with the flanking waterways, with which one of them actually connects, while its opposite number lies across the Place immediately beneath the end-façades of the Secretariats. The circular sheets at either end of the fountains are of different sizes: the larger placed outermost in each case, and sprouting a stone obelisk, altogether 30 feet high, from a double basin on a pedestal; the smaller and inner decorated only with a tiny curling jet. All six fountains are executed in the red stone, which their blown spray turns a rich rust colour. Finally, the ellipses of the Place are rounded off with curving rush-plaited railings of the same stone, 15 feet high, and finished, where radiating thoroughfares cut through them, with stone posts bearing stone lanterns (A, page 17.) As an urban space conceived in dressed stone, only the piazza of St. Peter's can compare with the Great Place of New Delhi for spaciousness and economy of design.

I must here interpolate a personal experience. I had reached this point in my observations when a company of Scottish soldiers, heralded by bagpipes, marched through the stone railings on to one end of the Great Place, and threading past the three fountains reached a point between the Secretariats. Here they wheeled sharply to the left and went at a smart pace up the asphalt gradient in the direction of the central dome. The dramatic value of Scottish kilts and Scottish music in foreign countries is fully realized by the authorities, who always use it to give point to "forceful demonstrations"; nor is that value lessened by the presence of a khaki coal-scuttle on each man's head. But in this setting, beneath this range of towering buildings multicoloured in the blue sky, amidst all this decorated space, the apparition of these troops defiling up that mysterious trough between the Secretariats towards the glowing dome beyond, their accoutrements flashing in the Indian sun, and only a crawling ox-cart to deflect the attention, was more than merely theatrical. The emotion of time and

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Plate III. January 1931.
The Viceroy's House and the Viceroy's Court. Sir Edwin Lutyens, Architect. In the foreground are the unfinished screen and the gateposts.



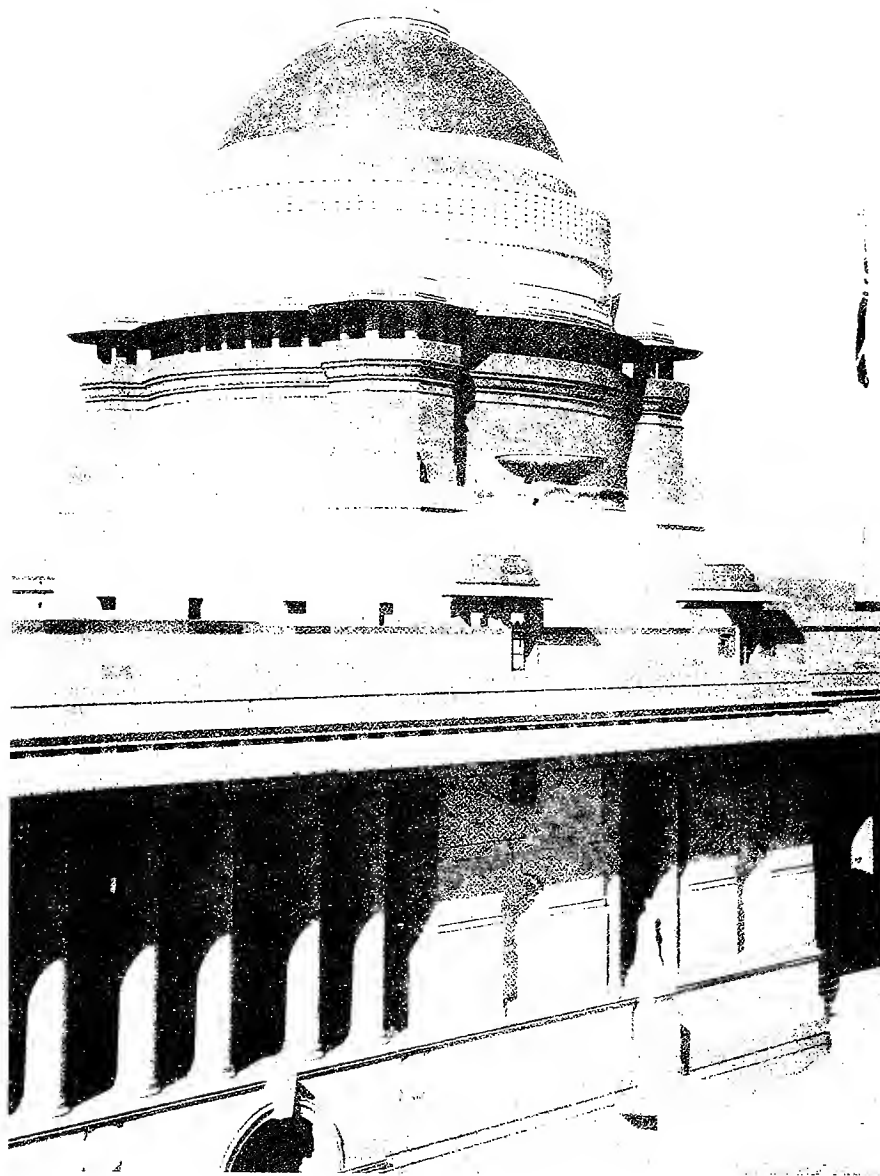


Plate IV.

January 1931.

The dome of the Viceroy's House. The flag is now flying on the top of the dome. Observe the union of the copper with the two stones at the base of the actual hemisphere.

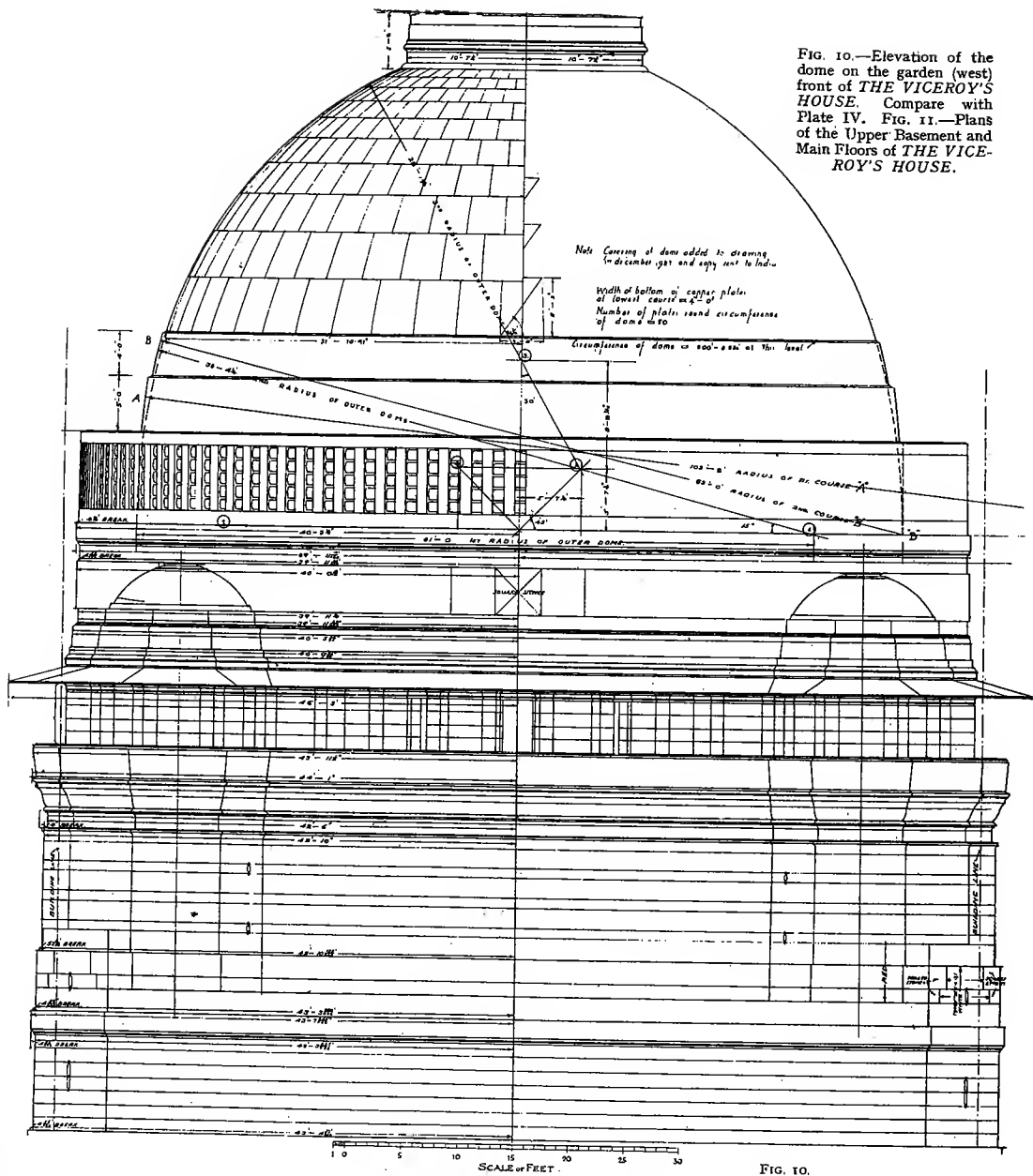
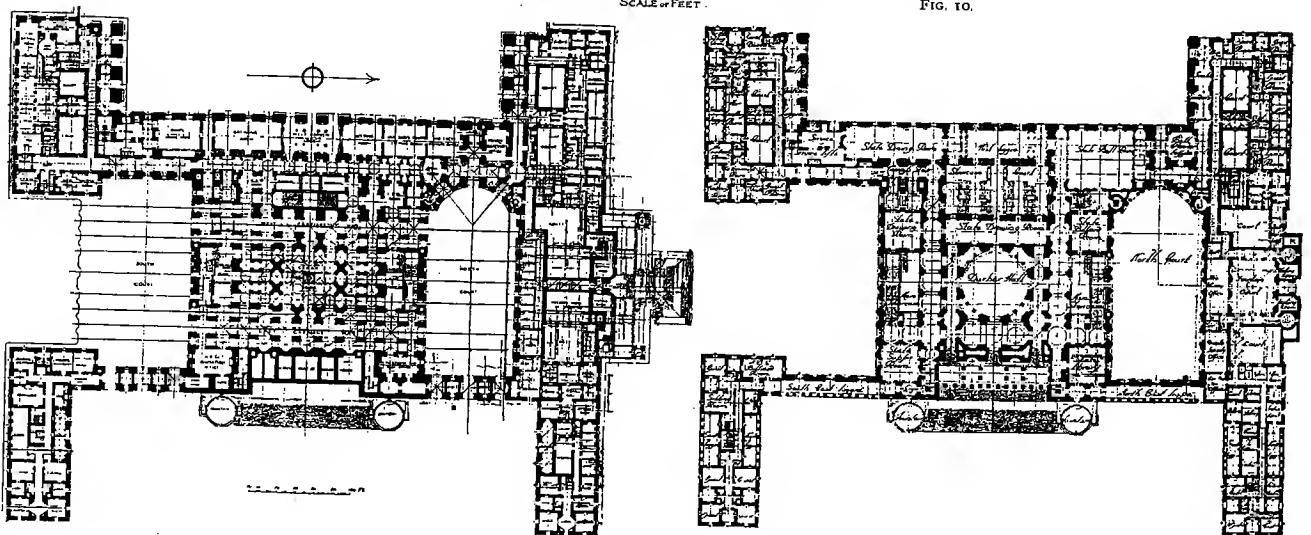


FIG. 10.



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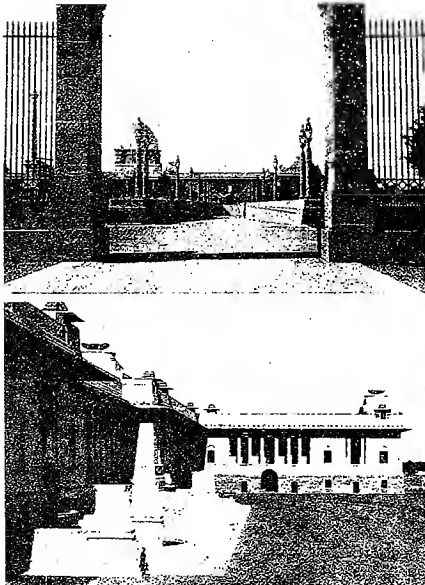
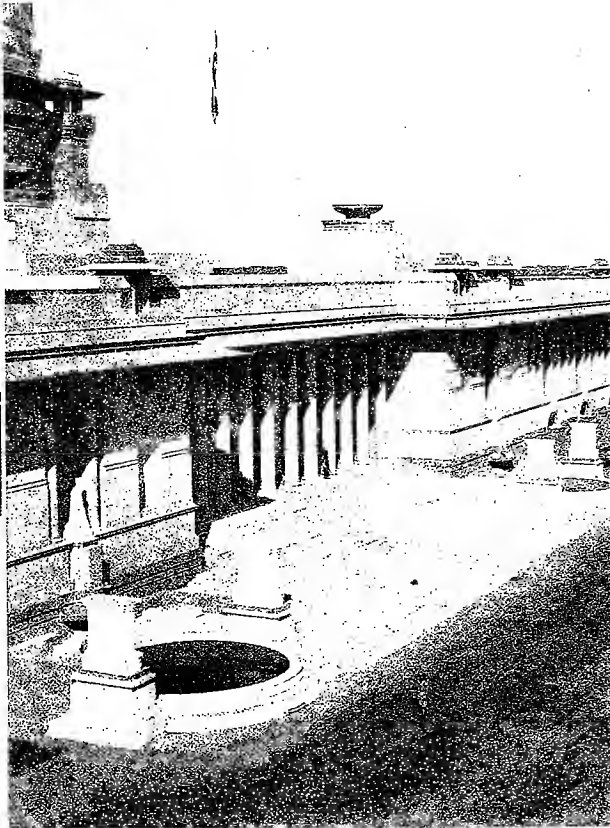


FIG. 12.—The north section of the east front of *THE VICEROY'S HOUSE* showing one of the ingenious sunk drives. Note the basket lanterns.
FIG. 13.—The east front and main steps of *THE VICEROY'S HOUSE*. In the background is the north wing capped by a fountain.

FIG. 14.—Part of the east front, the portico and the main steps of *THE VICEROY'S HOUSE*. On the left is a statue of Queen Mary; pedestals for horses are on either side of the pools.



circumstance, third dimension of true splendour, was evoked. The whole history of civilized man, of all his politics, empires, thrones, and wars, of all his effort to govern and be governed, followed in the soldiers' wake. That the entire spectacle, men and buildings, was the symbol of English dominion, seemed merely incidental. But that the evolution of government could demand, and create, in its everyday course, such a spectacle, seemed to postulate an apotheosis of human order. Indian nationalists, should they see them, will detect a propagandist ring in these words, and will point my attention from gaudy display to the rights of man. To which it must be answered that beauty is infallible, and confers a measure of right on its creators, whatever their sins.

To the right of the Great Place lies a circular building, approximately 125 yards in diameter, and a fifth of that distance, or 75 feet, high. This amphitheatre is the Council Chamber (Figs. 5, 6 and 7, and page 19). Its outer casing falls into three divisions: a red foundation, whence project various carriage-porches; a middle storey enclosed within a colonnade of heavy white stone pillars; and above the cornice which they support, a small attic storey of white plaster, which is divided in two by the heavy shadow of another cornice. Finally, above the centre, protrude three quarters of an irrelevant wart-like cupola. The idea underlying this building is worthy and remarkable. But its execution has not been successful. The pillars, though in themselves well proportioned, are so placed, and are so numerous, as to appear unpleasantly thin, like the iron struts of a fender.

A building so squat in proportion to its area needs to satisfy the eye with an illusion of massive solidity, as though it were an outcrop of the rock beneath. Unfortunately, the colonnade produces precisely the opposite effect; while the attic storey, robbed of meaning by its cornice, appears to be merely a screen. In addition, the red foundation looks more like a red veneer than a heavy plinth such as the building demands, the red being carried neither high enough up nor far enough out.

It is perhaps unfair to stress the poverty of the Council Chamber in a preliminary survey, as it stands apart from the main design; and, considered as a companion to the whole rather than as a separate entity, it possesses certain merits. Its rotundity, while striking a note of pleasant unexpectedness, nevertheless prevents it from impinging on the symmetry of the general lay-out, as a square building, with its inevitably triangular shadows, must have done. It must be admitted that, in view of its position, its unobtrusiveness is a major virtue.

It remains now to ascend the gradient between the Secretariats, and to resolve the mystery of the white pillar,

FIG. 15.—The garden of *THE VICEROY'S HOUSE* and a view of the dome from beneath the pergola. FIG. 16.—The dome, showing the copper hemisphere on its red and white base.

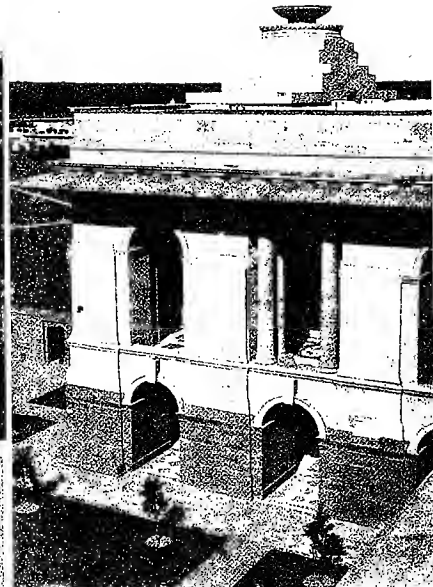
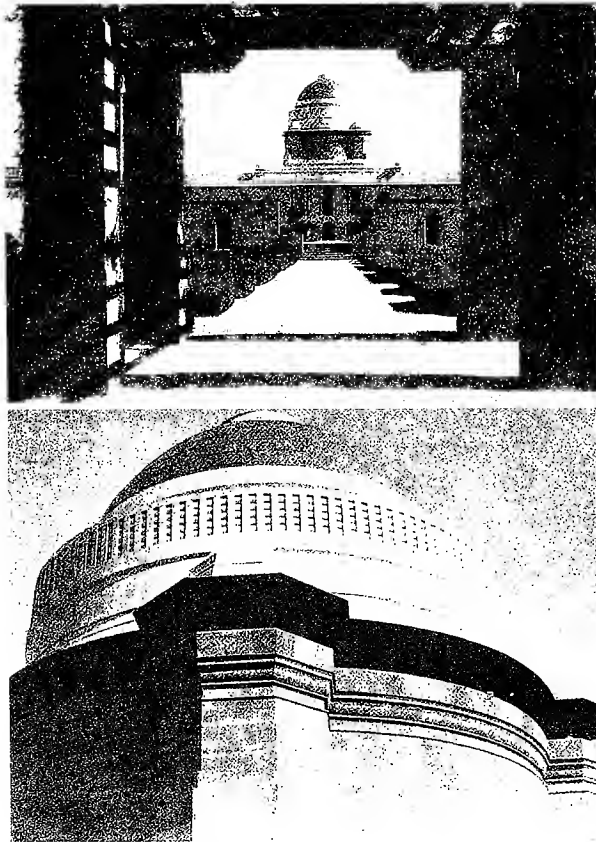


FIG. 17.—The north wing of the garden (west) front of *THE VICEROY'S HOUSE*, with its fountain on the roof.

of the central dome, and of the colonnade that was visible beneath it from the gravelled way.

As the asphalt leads up between the walls of red stone, the enormous length of the opponent Secretariats is revealed (Plate II). On either side, a great expanse of red and white wall is broken by four pillared extensions similar to those of the end-façades, and throwing similar triangular shadows. These extensions are placed in couples. Between each couple the main wall is thrust back into a broad recess broken by a tall Mogul doorway. Above the doorway, the big egg-top domes are now revealed in their entirety (D, page 21). In front of the buildings, on the platforms through which the road has been carved, are gardens, squares of turf, and orange trees, which are broken, beneath the domes, by cruciform sheets of water. Their chief harvest is a crop of red stone lamp-posts in hexagonal hats. The roadway reaches the level of the platforms just before the middle of each Secretariat. Immediately in front, though still half a mile away, stands the Viceroy's House and the Viceroy's dome.

Where the Secretariats end, a forecourt intervenes, a quarter of a mile long, revealing views of the surrounding

country on either side. This is enclosed by a screen of tall iron railings, closely set on a red stone foundation and divided at intervals by solid square columns of the same material (E, page 22). The central gateway is flanked by stone horse-guard boxes (B, page 22 and A, page 24), in which lancers mounted on black horses stand as motionless as their prototypes in Whitehall. On a broad space in the middle of the courtyard appears the white pillar, 100 feet high, known as the Jaipur column, and standing on a double base of red and white. On top of this column another 48 feet of ornament will cleave the sky—a floreated bronze pinnacle bearing a six-pointed star of glass, 15 feet in diameter.

On either side of the court run sunk drives, sloping down to a central point, then up from it, so as to show the foundation line of the guard-house at the end. Along their parapets stand red stone posts bearing twisted basket lanterns. The drives are flanked by strips of grass and water shaded by small trees. The gravel in the centre is of the same red as the stone. The whole court is raised above the surrounding country, and is supported by massive sunk walls of red stone, which run almost flush from the sides of the guard-house at the end. These are interrupted to allow the passage of lateral drives, which meet the others at their lowest point. The points of interruption are denoted by square gazebos of red stone capped with white hemispherical roofs (D, page 22).

The Viceroy's House, whose chief ornament is the central dome of the city already described, presents a colonnaded façade 500 feet in length. This is flanked by

two projecting wings, whose facades, standing 140 feet in advance of the main body, are each 64 feet wide (Plates III, IV, Figs. 10-18 and pages 23-27). The total length of the house is therefore 630 feet or 210 yards. The dome rises 170 feet from the courtyard, and 180 feet from the level of the surrounding plain.

Beneath the dome, a portico of twelve pillars, each 30 feet high, is approached by a stupendous pyramid of steps which splay out to meet the ground, thus increasing their perspective by an optical trick. This portico is slightly recessed. On either side of it, supported on the massive red foundation that runs all round the house, stand pylonic blocks of masonry in couples, embellished with flat niches at the bottom and small windows, black and square, immediately beneath the cornice above. Between each of these couples is a black space, wider at the top than the bottom, and relieved at the sides by single columns, between which are placed diminutive statues of the King and Queen in white marble. This marble contrasts brightly with the black shadow behind, and also with the cream sandstone on either side. Below each of these statues, which are 23 feet off the ground, lie circular pools framed in white marble; and on either side of these, tall pedestals, again of white marble, which are intended to receive four prancing horses.¹

Beyond the pylonic couples, in either direction, run colonnaded galleries, of somewhat less depth than the portico, till received by other pylons to meet the corners, whence the wings project from pylons at right-angles to the last. The insides of the wings, similarly colonnaded, end in couples of pylons similar to those which contain statues of the King and Queen; as also do their end-facades (page 26). The red base throughout is broken by a series of magnificently proportioned archways, black shapes, whose key-stones rise up to bind the narrow bases of the colonnaded galleries. But the red stone reaches only as high as the point, 14 feet up, whence springs the curve of the arch. Thence to the base of the colonnades is white; so, too, is all above. By this means the arches, unlike those of similar position in the Secretariats, bring the foundations into unity with the upper part and increase the value of the ratio between the two colours.

Above the colonnades and the portico runs a blind parapet, delicately finished with an imperceptible red inlay so as to meet the sky with decision, and at the corners continuing the convergent lines of the pylonic blocks. Beneath this parapet projects, to a distance of 8 feet, a *chujja*, a thin blade of stone shaped like a tin cooking-dish, and sloping downwards from a line of black and white dots at the base of the parapet. This *chujja*, whose underneath is decorated with a bold pattern of red, runs the whole way round the house, binding wings, pylons, colonnades, and blank walls, into a composite whole. That the building is a composite whole is its strongest feature. And the importance of the *chujja* cannot therefore be exaggerated (Figs. 10, 13, 14, 17 and 18; and B, page 24). Without it the building would disintegrate into groups, would become a kind of stone encampment rather than a piece of architecture. But the *chujja* performs its work not only of itself, but by the agency

¹ Possibly copies of those on St. Mark's. The horses, like the bells (page 18), are the subject of a Mogul legend concerning the dynasty. At present a donor is needed. If the animals must be copies, the War Horses of Kanarak offer the obvious prototype, being not only Indian, but superior aesthetically to those of Lysippus. See THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW, November 1930.

of its black shadow, or, when the sun has changed position, by the light its top catches when all above and below it is in darkness. Without the most profound understanding of the manipulation of light and shade, no building in India can ever be successful. This understanding the classic builders of India, Hindu and Mohammedan alike, possessed in the highest degree (H, page 15). And the architect here has not hesitated to take his lesson from them.

The parapet above this admirable device is broken, at the corners and beside the portico, by diminutive cupolas, properly called *chattris*, which appear in couples, one above each of the sixteen pylonic blocks visible from the front (A, page 15, and B, page 26). Only their tops, of heavily moulded red, capped with white and set on white blade-like *chujjas*, rise above the parapet; below, their bodies are indicated by a hollow break showing daylight. These *chattris* are very small and very severe. Their function is to define, not to decorate, the roof-line, and to suggest, with the utmost reticence, that a dome is to be uplifted.

They are not, however, the only additions to the roof-line. From the centre of each parapet of the wings' end-facades, rises a stepped plinth of white stone, which supports a saucer, and above this, another saucer. This motive is repeated above the corners of the portico, on either side of the dome; though here the plinths are set back behind the parapet. The saucers are fountains (Figs. 13, 14, 17, 18, Plate XI, and C, page 25). From the smaller a circular cascade descends into the larger. The engine to work them is concealed by the main flight of steps leading to the portico.

There remains the dome (Figs. 10, 15, 16; Plates IV and XII). Set back from the parapet, so as to be over the middle of the house and present a symmetrical effect from the sides, a square white base, rising well into the range of vision, supports a ponderous red circle. The corners of this base have been cut into narrow facets, which are continued upward into small blocks that point diagonally inwards towards a hypothetical centre. But on the fronts of these the white only forms a stepped pattern; the corners and sides have become red. The tops of these blocks have scarcely begun their inward course before they are absorbed into octagonal corner turrets of red stone—octagonal, save that three sides and half two others are in their turn absorbed into the circular red plinth behind. Both plinth and turrets are very squat and massive, and are further bound to one another at the top by a boldly projecting all-round moulding, which follows alike the circle and the swelling facets of the turrets with the most complete and satisfying uniformity. This brings the eye to a gallery whose red stone roof, sloping downwards, and thin as a sheet of iron, describes a similar course. This roof-*chujja* is supported on heavy bars of red stone, which stand out from the black shadow behind. Above it, each turret is carried to conclusion by a small white roof, a domical octagon capped with a white hemisphere. The circular central mass, into which these are absorbed like the turrets below them, now continues white, and is decorated, at the top, with a slightly projecting band of rush-plait pattern—a decoration which resembles the marks of a thumb-nail in close formation, and only serves to increase the general severity. Above this, well back, sits the dome on a heavy ribbon of red and white stone, which completes its hemisphere—a glowing copper mass, later to be gilded with a bold pattern, and bearing, on its apex, two crown pieces and a twopenny-bit of white stone.

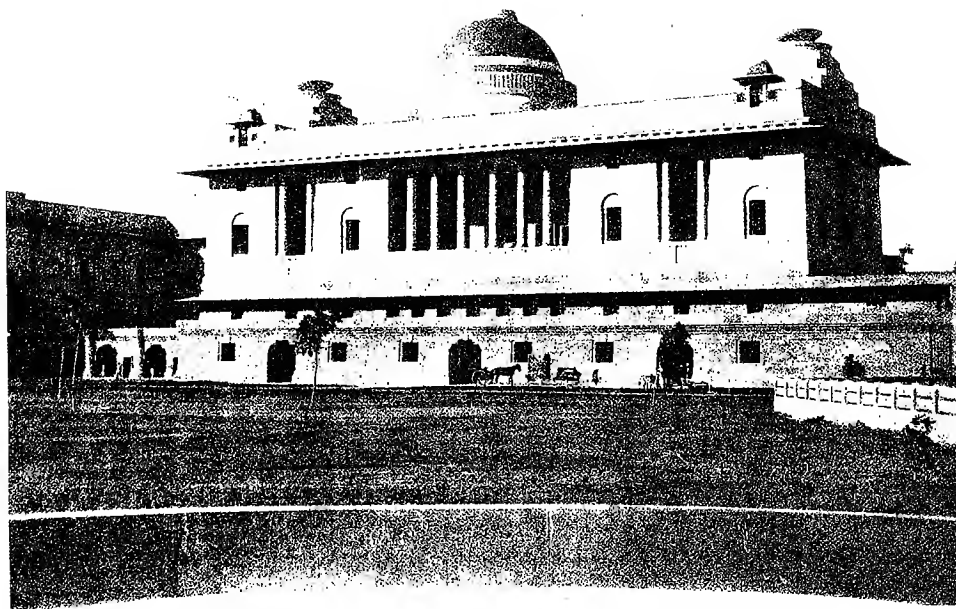


FIG. 18.—The east wing of the south front of *THE VICEROY'S HOUSE*.

Such are the salient motives of the Viceroy's House, as they resolve themselves after the first drunken sensation of pleasure has given place to rational thought. The building is remarkable for its gigantic size, its perfect proportion of mass and detail, its colour, and its ponderous adhesion to the earth. But its essential genius, its novelty, lies in the way these qualities have been brought to serve a taste in architectural form which pertains specifically to the twentieth century. For the whole house is constructed on a faintly pyramidal principle (A, page 26). The red foundation has actually a definite "batter." Above this, the convergence of the perpendiculars, though seemingly continuous, is in reality obtained by a system of delicate steps and mouldings. Viewed from a distance, the convergent outsides indulge a curious and delightful opposition to the directly vertical pillars of the colonnades. But this effect, at close quarters, when it might become inharmonious, is mitigated by the sides of the pylonic blocks being actually, though imperceptibly, at successive right-angles to successive horizontal levels. The feeling of movement in mass thus produced has found particular favour and widespread expression in the modern industrial age. It is an admirable quality, dynamic, expressive of growth and at the same time of solid union with the earth. But hitherto, except in Tibet, its interpretation has been so strictly industrial, so ruthless in its disregard of the graces of architecture, that even the best modern buildings, whatever their virtues of line and mass, invariably present a raw and stark appearance and smell, truthfully enough as a rule, of imprisoned clerks and the eternal pregnancy of machines. But in the Viceroy's House we behold this dynamic quality, while enfolded with sufficient severity

and on a sufficient scale to make it effective, combined with a scenic employ of colour, a profound knowledge of shadow-play, and the most sensitive delicacy of moulding, pattern, and ornament. Moulding, pattern, and ornament are rare; but where they exist, they do so only in relation to the whole; they help complete the dynamic quality; they never amuse, are never simply ornamental or reminiscent. At the same time the fountains are playing on the roof, and a metal hemisphere flashes in the sun. These tell us that our age, despite its physical enslavement by the machine and the mass, has again discovered that joy in the sensuous beauty of the world perpetuated by the works of the Italian Renaissance. The Viceroy's House at New Delhi is the first real justification of a new architecture which has already produced much that is worthy, but, till now, nothing of the greatest. It is remarkable, indeed astonishing, to remember that its design was completed nearly twenty years ago.

Since first turning up the King's Way, the traveller has come two miles. Returning to the iron screen across the front of the courtyard, and afterwards perhaps ascending one of the Secretariats' towers, he can now look back across the park and waterways to the great white Arch in the distance. On all sides radiate the avenues of the new city, lined with bungalows in spacious woody gardens, and carved into merry-go-rounds at points of intersection. Every thoroughfare conducts the eye to some more ancient monument, looming in grey silhouette from the horizon of the imperial plain. Even the great Pearl Mosque, four miles off in the heart of the old city, has its approach, set at an angle of sixty degrees to the axis of the central design. Beyond the Arch, a hump of walls proclaims the Old Fort. A side avenue discloses the clustered domes of the tomb of

Safdar Jang. Far away the Q'tab is visible, an extravagant chimney on the south horizon.

Dusk approaches, falling like a curtain. The lights come out, furlongs of gold dots, suffusing the sky with an electric blue that deepens to black. Stars complete the night, a powder of silver. Below, the dark earth seems as though its crust had been punctured with a million pricks to reveal

an ocean of light within. The plan of the new city lies open as a page of print: a map of quivering gold points. An artist has planned it, the artist of the fountains on the Great Place and the Viceroy's House. "Will it ever be finished?" I asked him five minutes later, warmed by a glass of milk punch. "You may have observed," he replied, "that London is not finished yet."

II.—A Short History of the City.

1.—The Main Buildings.

AFTER a cursory view of the city as it is, it will not be out of place to inquire how it came to be. On December 12, 1911, George V, King and Emperor, in the course of the Delhi Durbar, proclaimed his decision that the capital of India should return to its ancient site. He expressed a desire that "the planning and designing of the public buildings to be erected be considered with the greatest deliberation and care," in order that the new city should be worthy of its predecessors. As an earnest of the official intention he and the Queen-Empress laid two foundation stones, hastily sliced out of one, on a spot some ten miles distant from the present site. These, after various vicissitudes, have been respectfully incorporated in the present buildings.

No sooner was the decision made public than an angry controversy broke loose. Calcutta, founded amidst the vilest climate, the remotest marshes, and the most intemperate people in India, embellished and aggrandized by successive Viceroys with monstrous buildings and preposterous statues, and breathing a preponderantly commercial opinion upon the fate of 300,000,000 people, clamoured to retain the eminence for which it was so patently unfitted. In England, a chorus of informed rage found vent in the columns of *The Times*. Undeterred, the India Office and the Government of India took the first and vital step in the creation of a new capital. They appointed an architect to build it.

It was fully realized that if the city were ever to materialize on the scale suggested, its building would offer a field for architectural invention such as had not been vouchsafed the talent of Europe since Pope Leo X began the demolition of old St. Peter's. This field, this opportunity, was to be placed in the hands of one man. When we recall the irremediable horror of the buildings erected in London at the beginning of this century—of the Victoria Memorial, Kingsway, Oxford Circus, the Piccadilly Hotel, and Westminster Cathedral—and when we recall the distinction that attached to their authors—the official choice of a true artist in the person of Edwin Lutyens must seem a God-sent accident. Nothing happier had graced the public life of England since George IV hit upon Nash.

To be an artist in England is to arouse suspicion. To entrust an artist with a great imperial enterprise was to arouse the most profound apprehension. It was felt, and rightly, that a man such as Lutyens would hesitate to rear a poem by Kipling in stone. A second controversy arose, which cannot, for tact's sake, be altogether ignored. For there resulted from it an attitude of prejudice against Lutyens as Lutyens which persists to this day, and which partially explains the fanatical hatred of the new capital expressed by all who are, or once were, British residents in India.

In despite of all opposition, the architect, in committee with two others, proceeded to report on the available sites; and in 1913, that of the Raisina Hill was approved. Meanwhile the buildings had been taking shape in the architect's mind and on paper. Following the taste of Mogul builders, the materials were to be stones of red and white. It was hoped that the white would be marble. But expense would not allow of this. The Viceroy's House was designed in two sandstones,

as it now stands, but surmounted by a larger, more expansive dome. The latter had to be decreased for the same reason as the marble was abandoned.

In 1912, Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy, had the misfortune to announce that the buildings must be completed in four years. Sir Edwin Lutyens, faced with the necessity not only of designing in so short a time the complicated interiors of the Viceroy's House, the Secretariats, and the Council Chamber, but of planning and supervising the lay-out of a city calculated to hold 70,000 persons and to allow for unlimited expansion in the future, was obliged to ask for assistance. His choice of a coadjutor fell on Sir Herbert Baker, already noted for his Government buildings at Pretoria. It was decided that while Lutyens should retain the Viceroy's House, with its garden, court, stables, and bodyguard lines, the Great Place with its fountains, the waterways and the King's Way, the Record Office, and the general lay-out of the city streets, as his province, Baker should undertake the Secretariats and the Council Chamber. With the addition of the All-India War Memorial, the Arch at the foot of the King's Way, which was later assigned to Lutyens, this arrangement was adhered to. The main buildings of New Delhi, as they stand today, are the work of two men, united by a single scheme of material and by a single, though since modified, conception of their lay-out. These unifying factors were the work of the original architect.

No artist ever gave the best service of his life and genius to a project more wholly than Sir Edwin Lutyens to New Delhi. The Viceroy's House was the centre of his scheme, the favourite on which he lavished the resources of his thought; not only designing or overseeing the whole of the furniture down to the bedroom crockery, but even placing the very pansies in the garden. Since he was called upon to provide it, the Viceroy of India should inhabit the most superb dwelling on earth—a dwelling that might serve a film-producer as Babylon, yet please the visitor with its soap-dishes. On Boxing Day 1929, when I paid my first visit to New Delhi, the Viceroy had been in residence for sixty hours. I found Sir Edwin slightly bewildered. "I feel," he said, "as if the Viceroy's House were a newly married daughter. It seems extraordinary not to be able to wander about it whenever I want to any more." I was reminded of Gibbon's soliloquy in the garden at Lausanne: "I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom, and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the thought that I had taken everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion and that whatsoever must be the future fate of my History, the life of the historian must be short and precarious." Sir Edwin goes out to Delhi again in February to attend the official opening of the new capital, twenty years after the King's proclamation. Let us hope that while the life of the historian did prove short and precarious, that of the architect may see emplaced the last stone of the Liverpool Roman Catholic Cathedral.

The whole work of actual construction was undertaken by the Government of India's Public Works Department. Between such a body, shivering in the blast of public economy, and an artist, concentrated on the realization of an æsthetic idea, occasional disagreement was inevitable. How far the Public Works Department adopted tactics of deliberate obstruction—finding, as was natural, little relevance in fountains on a roof; or how wantonly extravagant was the determination of the architects;

Fig. 20.

FIG. 19.

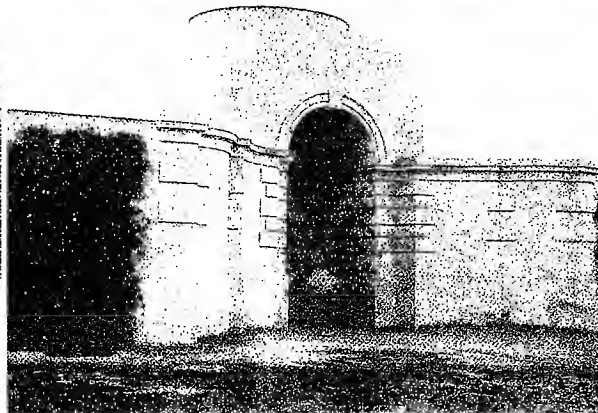
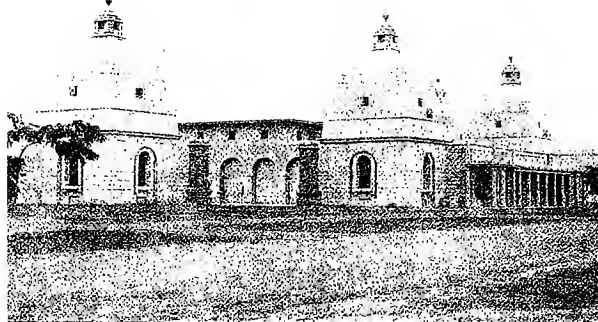
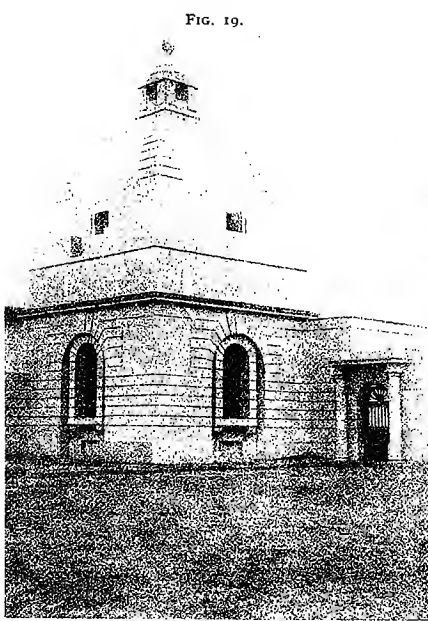


FIG. 21.

FIGS. 19, 20 and 21.—Details of the STABLES. Sir Edwin Lutyens, Architect. The buildings are carried out in slightly tinted plaster. The balls on the tops of the domes are brass.

this age of excessive public amenity could scarcely bear the shock of discovering. But the history of New Delhi will be written one day, and will yet make unborn generations laugh,¹ even through the tears they drop for the might-have-beens, for the white marble, the larger dome, and many other things.

There is one might-have-been, however, that can scarcely be dismissed without something more than a passing regret. Sir Edwin Lutyens originally planned the Viceroy's House to stand on the brow of the Raisina Hill, in the place now occupied by the Secretariats, whence its tremendous length would have dominated the plain for miles around. It is, in fact, accurate to say that the whole choice of site, and the main lines of the city's design, were originally determined by this consideration. The Secretariats were to stand below, on what is now the Great Place. But on Sir Herbert Baker's arrival in 1913, it was urged upon Sir Edwin that they also should stand up on the height, and that the Viceroy's House should be placed further back. To this arrangement he consented, on the understanding that the entire area between the Secretariats should be so excavated as still to reveal the foundation line of the Viceroy's House to the plain below. Preparations were begun. And it was not until 1915-16 that Sir Edwin, to his inexpressible mortification, learned that his condition, indispensable to the success of his design, would not be carried out. The flights of steps which it would have entailed were considered inconvenient for clerks wishing to proceed from one Secretariat to the other. Instead, it was decided to retain the ground at its natural level, with the exception of a small trough just sufficiently long to admit a gradient suitable for normal traffic. Thus, as has already been shown, from no point on the King's Way is it possible to see the foundation line of the great central mass of architecture; half way up, at the cross-roads, the colonnade begins to disappear; from the edge of the Great Place only the dome is visible; and from half way across the Great Place even this is gone. The effect is still magnificent: the dome of the Viceroy's House alone is sufficient to dominate

¹ Lord Hardinge, whether from Christian or Mohammedan convictions, originally stipulated for the use of the pointed arch throughout.

any city; and even when it has sunk out of sight, the very mystery of the asphalt gradient leading into the sky still rivets the eye to the axis of the design. But that the artist's conception, and the greatest architectural effort since Versailles, have been deliberately spoiled, hardly admits of question. Those responsible will find it difficult to absolve themselves from the charge of selfishness. So far they have attempted no justification of their action. But it is a curious and consoling fact that whatever the callousness of contemporaries, the judgment of posterity on vaudals is generally vindictive beyond all reason.

2.—The Residential City.

It were mistaken to imagine New Delhi as consisting of nothing more than a beating heart, while the surrounding network of arteries and veins, umbrageous, polished, and lit at night, remains lifeless and empty. A whole new body of architecture has sprung up to meet the needs of the arriving residents, designed partly by the Public Works Department, partly by a colony of independent architects. Throughout the residential city, a uniform standard of taste and design prevails; and the standard is a high one. Some buildings have a negative aspect; others may even be pronounced unsuccessful. But I recall no single structure which can justly be called offensive in a positive sense. A modern city can hardly ask a greater tribute. The potency of Lutyens's influence is everywhere visible. And it seems probable that New Delhi is already nurturing a specifically Indo-British school of architecture.

The designer of the Maharajah of Bikaner's new house, for example, has adorned its roof-line with the fountain motive of the Viceroy's House, using the stepped plinth and flat basin as a pleasant means of parapet relief. And it was still more surprising to remark this same device, further flattened and modified, capping the newly risen walls of the Bengal Legislative Assembly's building in Calcutta.

It was foreseen from the outset that the sovereigns of the major Indian States would wish, or would feel it their duty, to erect palaces in the new city, as the Boyars did in St. Petersburg. The approach to the Memorial Arch at the foot of the King's Way has therefore been called the Princes' Place. To the north of the Arch stands the grey and white residence of H.E.H. the Nizam, whose design, though fussy, has the elements of goodness. Elsewhere, sites have been reserved, and plans prepared by Sir Edwin Lutyens, for the palaces of the Jam Sahib and the Maharajah Gaekwar of Baroda. He also designed the house of the Commander-in-Chief.

The English quarter of an Indian town, built to make life tolerable in the heat, generally presents the aspect of a forest. Save in Bombay and Calcutta, where land is valuable, the houses are of one storey and are therefore mainly hidden by the vegetation around them. In England, the word "bungalow" is the complete expression of architectural sin. In India it has been transformed into something solid and spacious, lending itself to the most diverse shapes, its wings hinging on obtuse angles, and its ends being finished with conches and apses, while its pillared loggias make play with parallel, or sometimes opposite, curves. Each house is set in a compound of two or three acres, whose trees have matured in ten years, and become enormous in twenty; so that a road containing twenty houses on either side would stretch from Marble Arch to the British Museum. New Delhi will never, like Calcutta or Bombay, present the aspect of a Western town, with its streets confined within ramparts of domestic masonry. At one or two points only the buildings are beginning to congregate in close formation. Hospitals, clubs, a plethora of churches, a growing number of office buildings, and a shopping quarter with a cinema, already bring an air of reality to the city. But these are necessarily isolated in an area which contains 80 miles of roadway, 70 of water-pipes, and 202 of electric cables.

3.—The Critics.

We have now observed the city both as an æsthetic fact and as an historical event. Before proceeding to appraise its architecture in detail, it will be wise to ask: How well is New Delhi believed, by the inhabitants of India, to fulfil the practical purpose for which it was built?

The question is still obscured by a blind curtain of prejudice. There are, it is true, those who still lament the transference from Calcutta for Calcutta's sake. But of that city's general disagreeableness, and of its unfortunate political atmosphere, enough has already been said. Nor is it necessary to stress its geographical remoteness compared with Delhi's convenience. From the standpoint of the administration, the change of centre has been unquestionably beneficial. And this is admitted by those who judge the question on its merits. But these are few. And it does not take long for the visitor to discover that throughout India, New Delhi is an object of furious execration.

The line of criticism which makes the nearest approach to sense is that which deprecates the expense. In 1927, £10,000,000 had already been spent on the city; and the cost of completion, it was then calculated, would absorb another £5,000,000. These figures are not small; but they cover, besides the official buildings, all roads, water and light, the planting of 10,000 trees, the carriage of the stone from Dholpur, and vast works of excavation and levelling. And compared with the amount of money spent on demolition and re-erection during one year in London or New York, they amount to nothing.¹ In reality, no city in the world exhibiting the least pretension to æsthetic virtue has ever been created with such astonishing economy. Let it be

remembered that Justinian is reputed to have spent £12,000,000 in bullion on St. Sophia alone; and that in his day gold was worth five times as much as it is now.

A primary consideration in the designing of the new capital was that it should gratify, as far as economy would allow, the Indian taste for splendour. Here again it has failed to please. The educated Indian, soaked in the utilitarian doctrines of the West, sees only sweated blood in the gorgeous and variegated buildings that shine over the plain, while the Indian population, grovelling in the fields beneath, possesses an average income of £2 a year. Nor, even if he can bring himself to discard political and economic prejudice, is he impressed æsthetically. Indian taste, save in jewels, miniatures, and stuffs, has been disastrously vitiated by the Western influence of the last century. Akbar and Shah Jehan would have cried for joy at the seventh Delhi or have hailed its builders as their worthy successors. Today, Indian princes commiserate with Lady Irwin on having to live in "such a plain house." And the most cultivated of that august corporation told me with his own lips that he would have "preferred a combination of the Hindu and Gothic styles." His remark carried me back into the fantastic realms of Horace Walpole and the Prince Regent. But I then recalled that architectural Sodom, Bombay, and remembered that, after all, it was not a joke. No; the magnificence of New Delhi is characterized by a restraint which cannot appeal to a taste contracted under the spell of Ruskin and Gilbert Scott. In philosophy and literature, the Indian is rediscovering his cultural individuality. But in art he remains, with few exceptions, subservient to degraded and repulsive Western importations. Perhaps, in the end, New Delhi will lead him to discover the true virtue still latent in the West, and, by that roundabout means, to a new appreciation of his own superb monuments.

If the new capital has failed to find favour with the people it was primarily designed to please, still less is it approved by the English residents. The attitude of Indo-Britain, apart from the plea of expense already mentioned (which in most cases is nothing more than a rational peg for intuitive hatred), is one of pure prejudice and reveals that most ungenerous quality of the English mind, its animal suspicion of novelty. The English speak of the town with a kind of outraged fury, as though it had violated their wives. "Barrack-like" and "bare" are their stock epithets. One feels they would have liked the Viceroy's House to be "homely," full of nooks and gables, a babel of verandahs and sun-blinds. Further objections, which have a potential validity, are that mosquitoes will breed on the water-ways, and that the distances are inconveniently large. But the prime defect, the unspeakable *crime*, the ATROCITY that has made every British heart from coast to coast beat faster, is the inconvenient flush of the Viceroy's water-closet, and, worse, the noisome rumour that Lady Irwin's bathroom resembles a mortuary. How these legends about the "usual offices" of the Viceroy's House arose, how they fastened on public chivalry from Kashmir to Ceylon, no one can ever tell. But ask the question "What do you think of New Delhi?" of any British resident in India; and he, or she, will reply with the inevitability of a cuckoo (and the suspicion of a sob) that, if the Viceroy and his wife are to be subjected, as long as the British dominion endures, to such unmentionable miseries, then as far as he, or she, is concerned, would that the city had never been built! Beseech him, or her, to confine their attention solely to æsthetic consideration; you will be answered with a slow shake of the head and a pursing of eyes and lips. It is useless. You might have thought that colour and size at least would appeal to the vulgar. You were wrong. They would have liked a town of Swiss chalets, mosques, and Gothic spires carved with Hindu ornament, a Wembley of reminiscence. Too late, alas, for Sir Edwin's guidance and the peace of India did Mr. Osbert Sitwell point out that—

"As for the General
He disapproves of Art,
And does not believe in it."

¹ "The plan for building a new Metropolitan Opera House upon a plaza to be opened on the tract of land in the middle of New York which Mr. John D. Rockefeller bought two years ago for a music centre has been revived. It is expected that the 'Radio City' will be complete by 1933.

No building has yet been begun; but about 30 houses have been demolished as part of the work of preparing the site. The total cost of the scheme is estimated at about £50,000,000."—Extract from *The Times*, October 17, 1930.

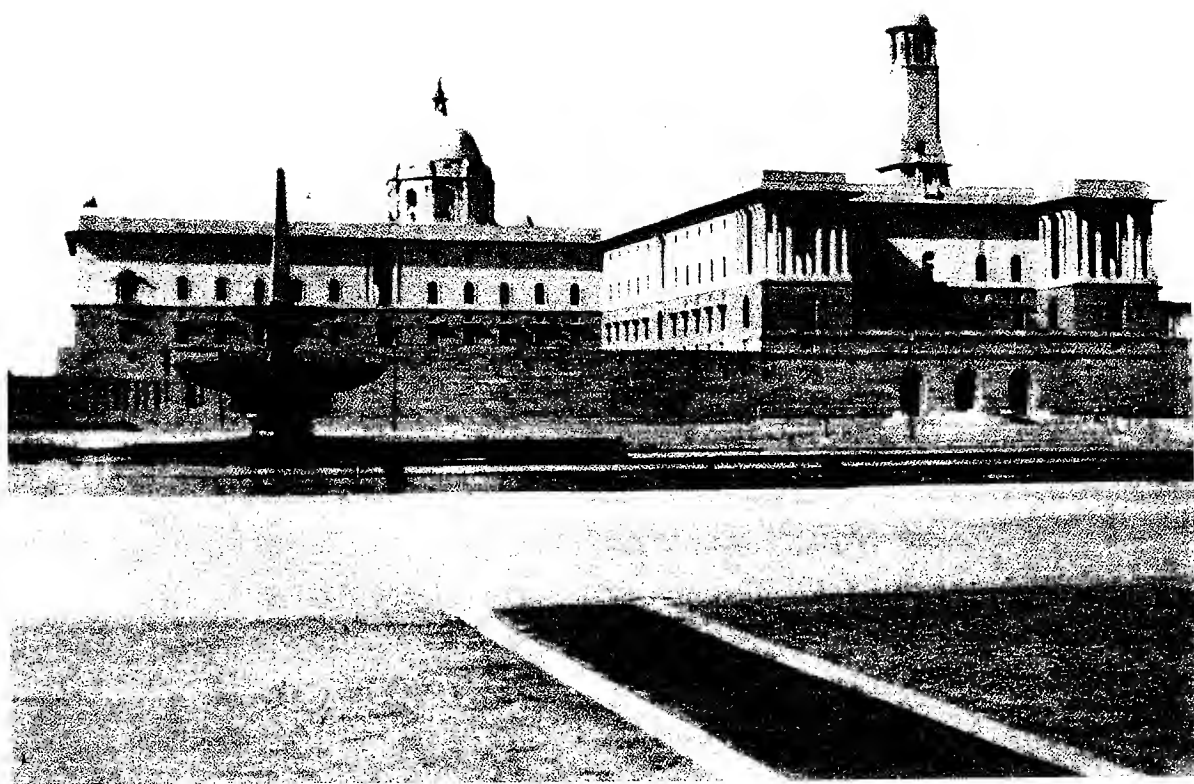


Plate V. January 1931.
*The east view of the South Secretariat
 from the Great Place. The line of the
 heavy foundation beneath the end façade
 is continued by a wall. The pillared
 extension in front, and the resulting
 shadow, give form to the mass. In the
 foreground is one of the six fountains
 of the Great Place.*

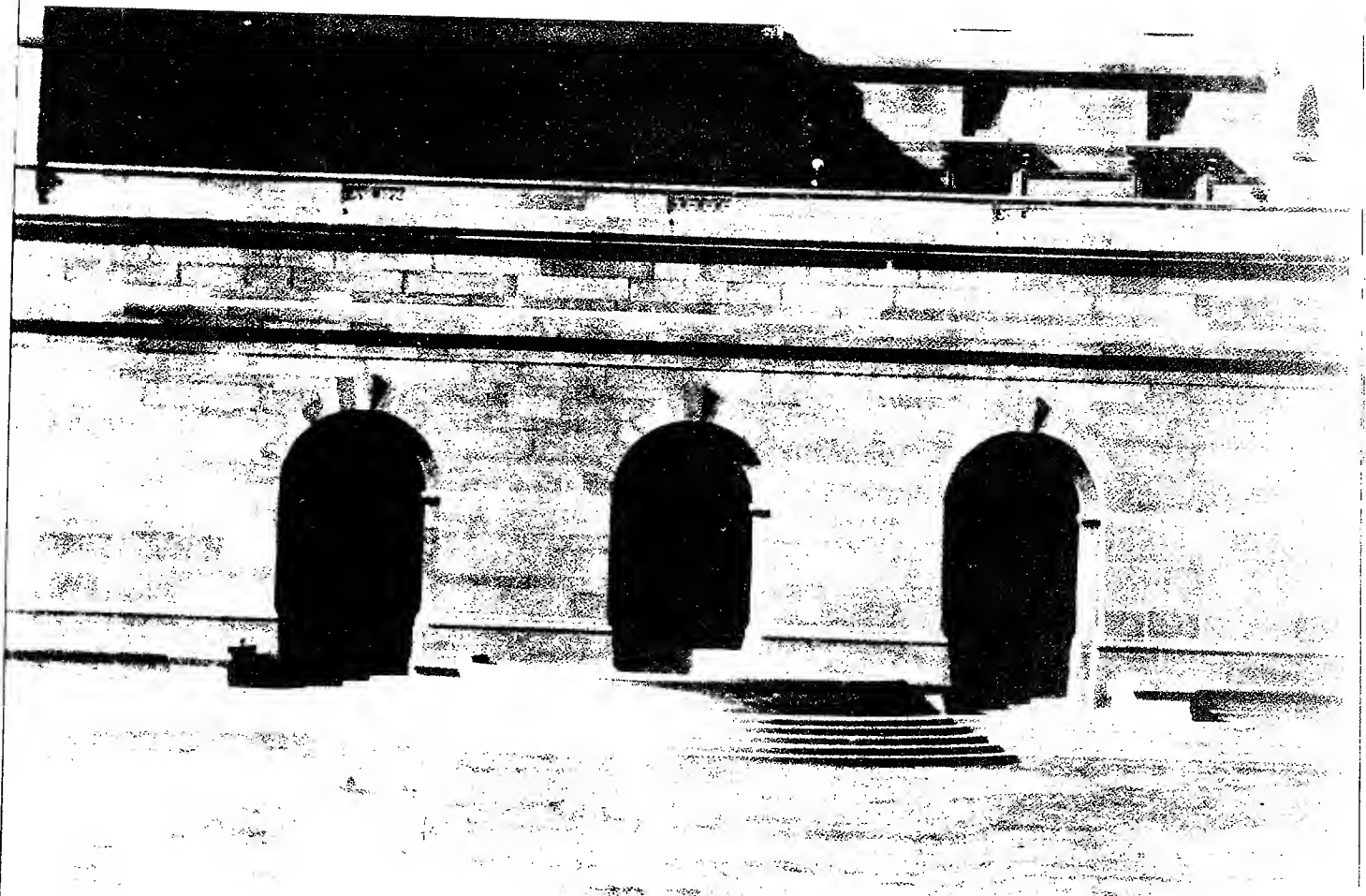


Plate VI.

January 1931.

A detail of the foundations of the South Secretariat, abutting on the Great Place. See Plate V for its general position. The simplicity of the stone mouldings displays the texture of the dressed sandstone to the best advantage.

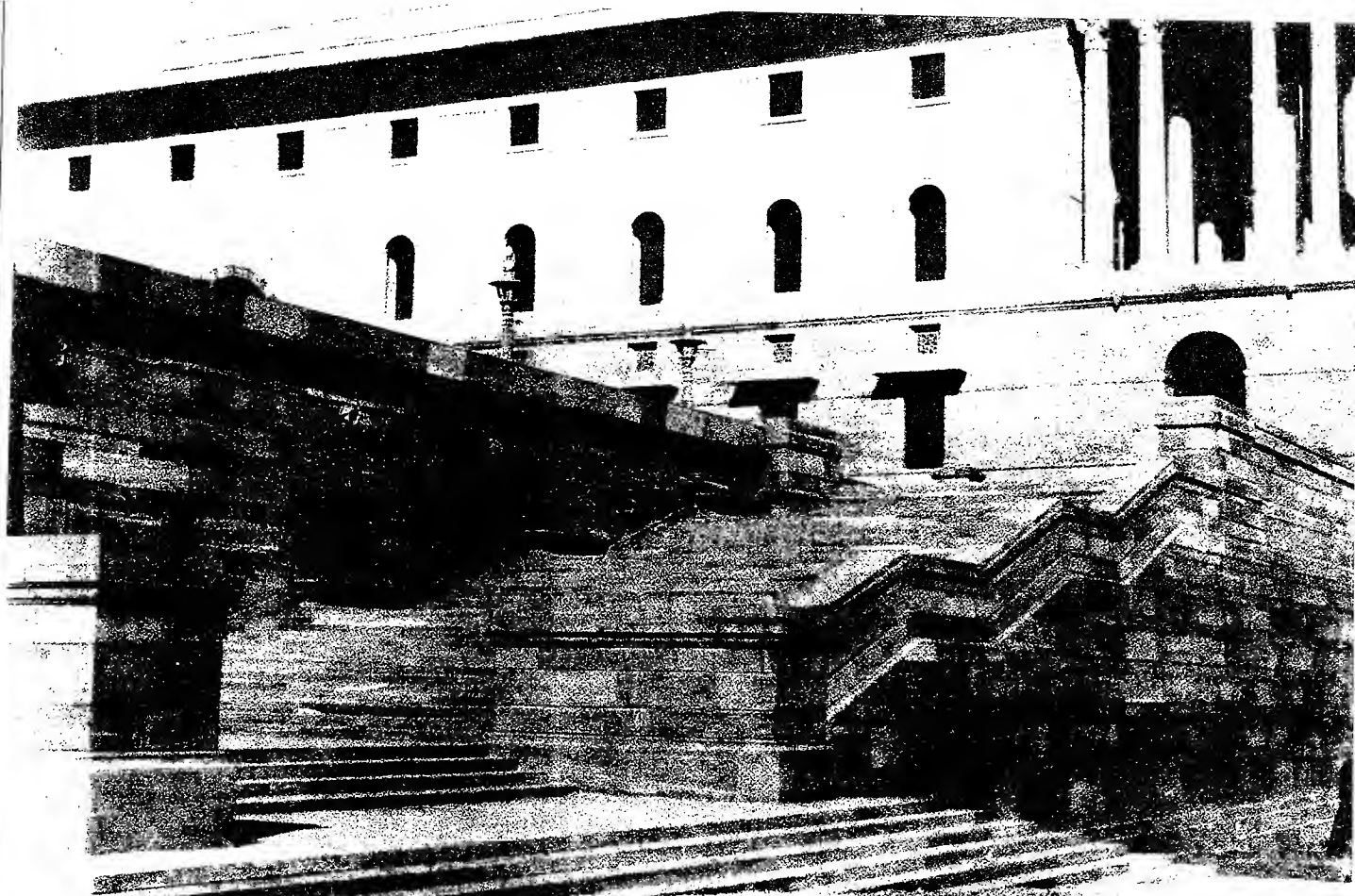


Plate VII.

January 1931.

The massive flights of steps leading from the Great Place to the North Secretariat. The reality of this picture can only be imagined by recalling the colours of the two stones used, a deep burnt rhubarb and a rosy cream.

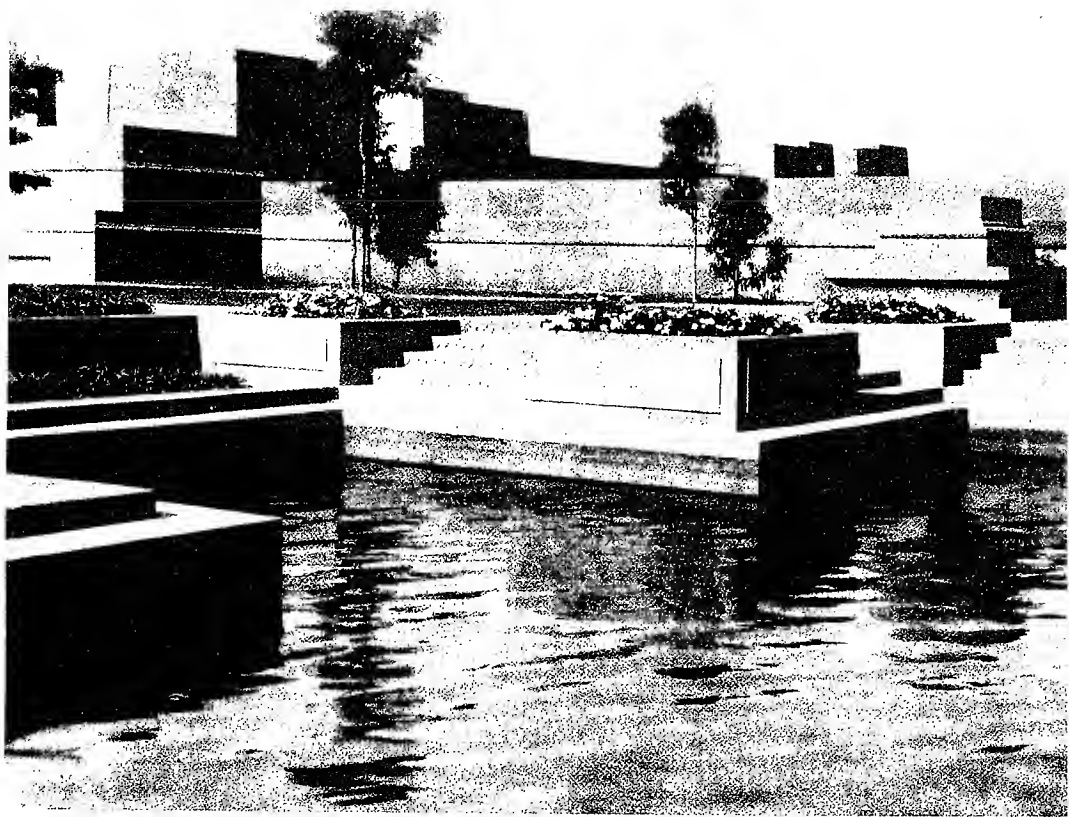


Plate VIII.

January 1931.

A pool with flowers in the Viceroy's garden. The surrounds to the pool are of red stone, and the flowers are purple violas.

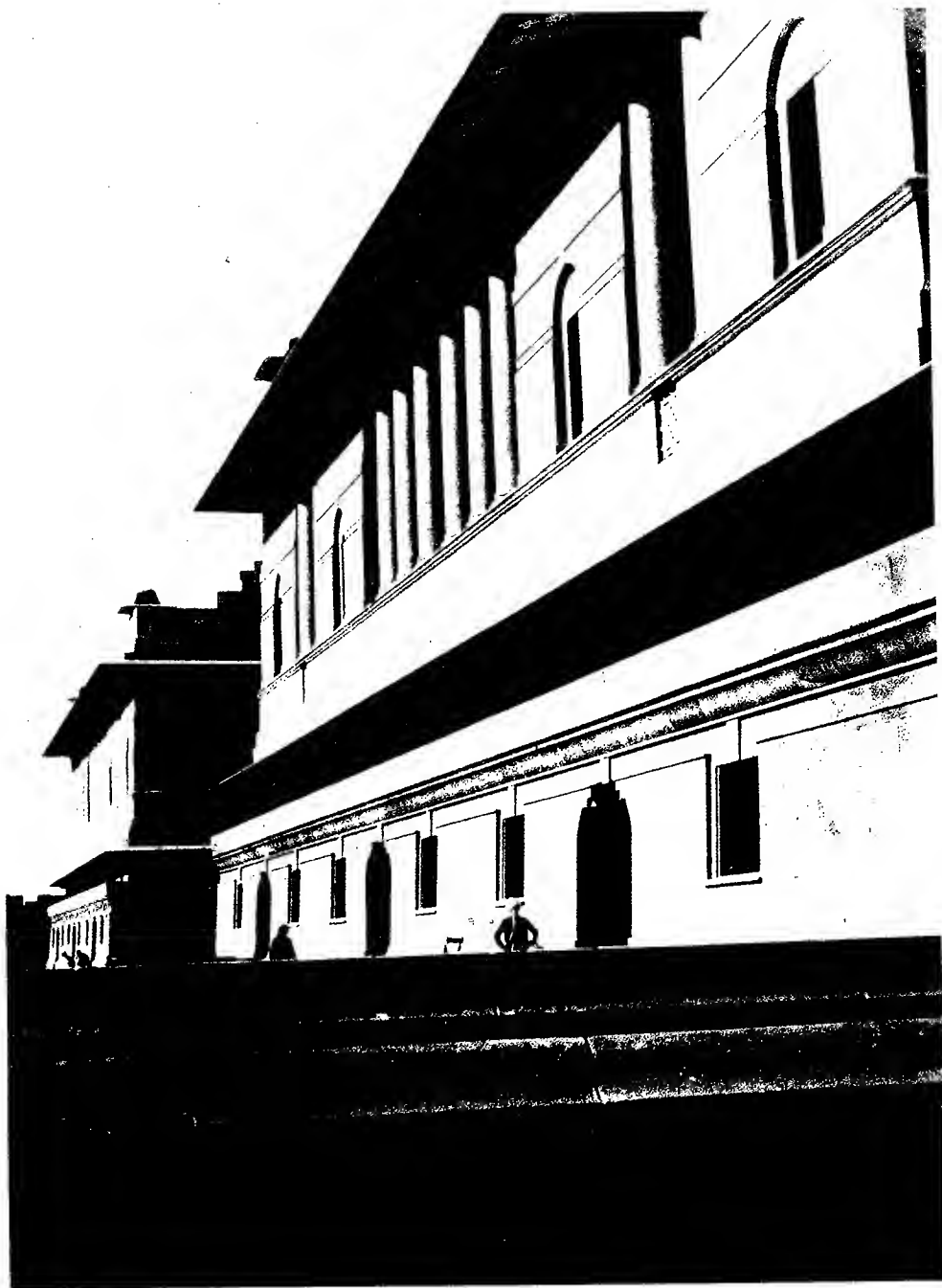


Plate 1K.

January 1931.

A detail of the south front of the Viceroy's House, showing the pattern beneath the chujja (cornice), the lower chujja and gallery, and the extra foundation necessitated by the ground level.

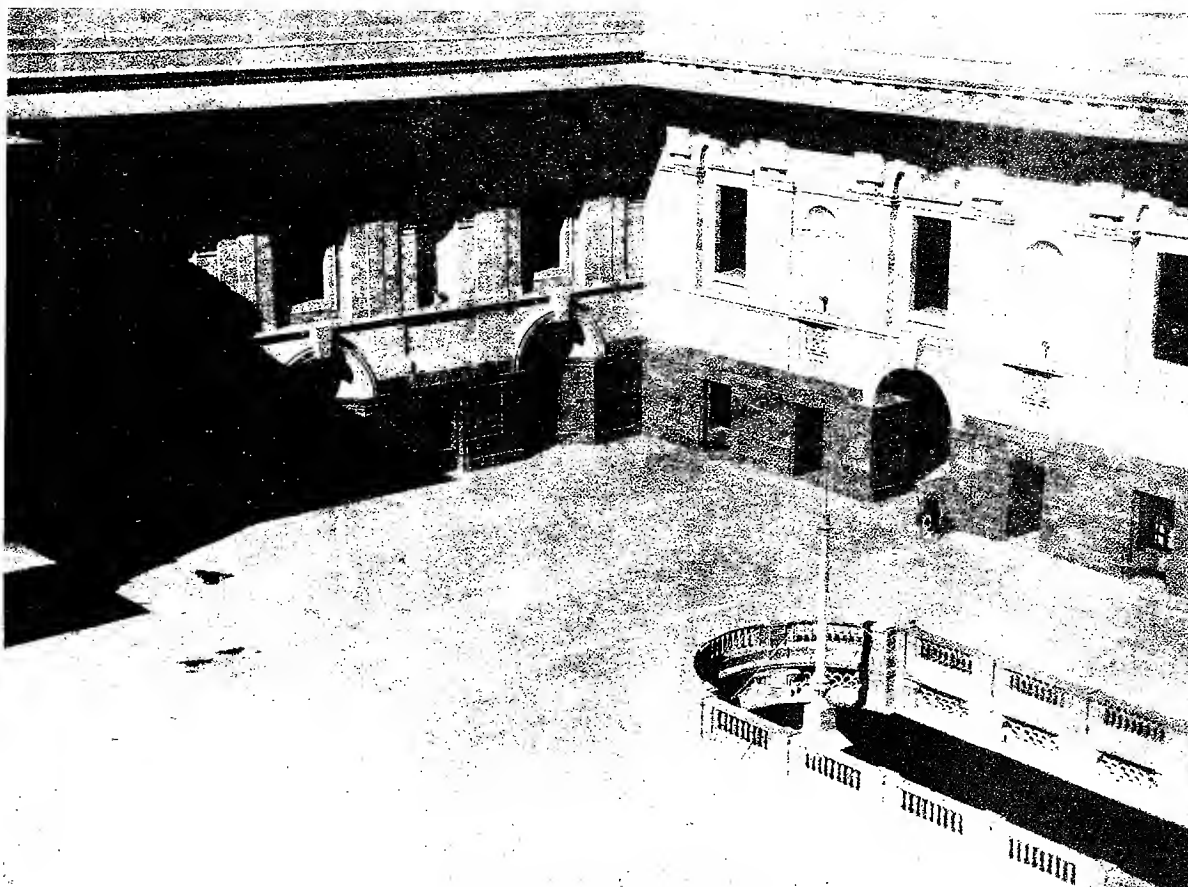
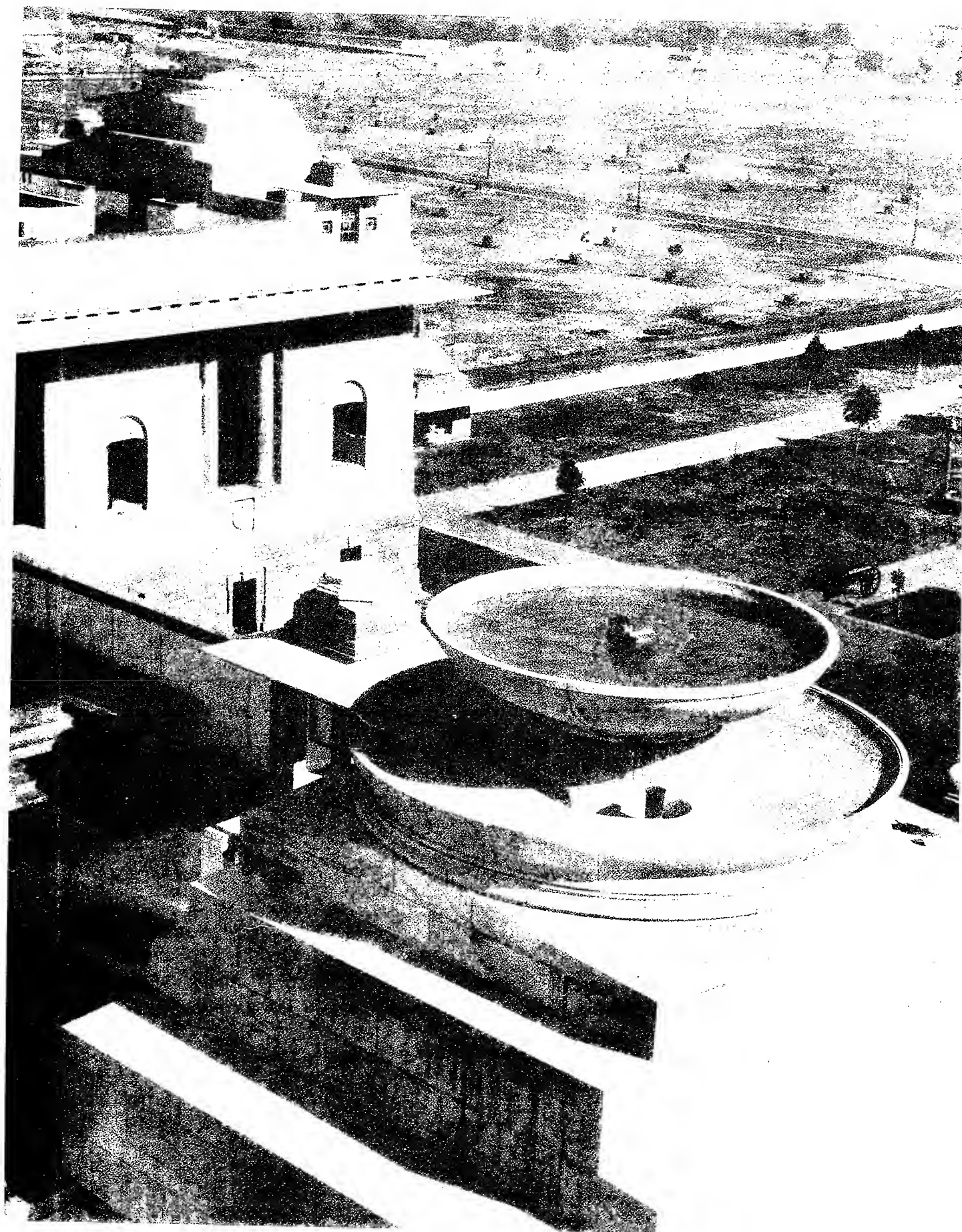
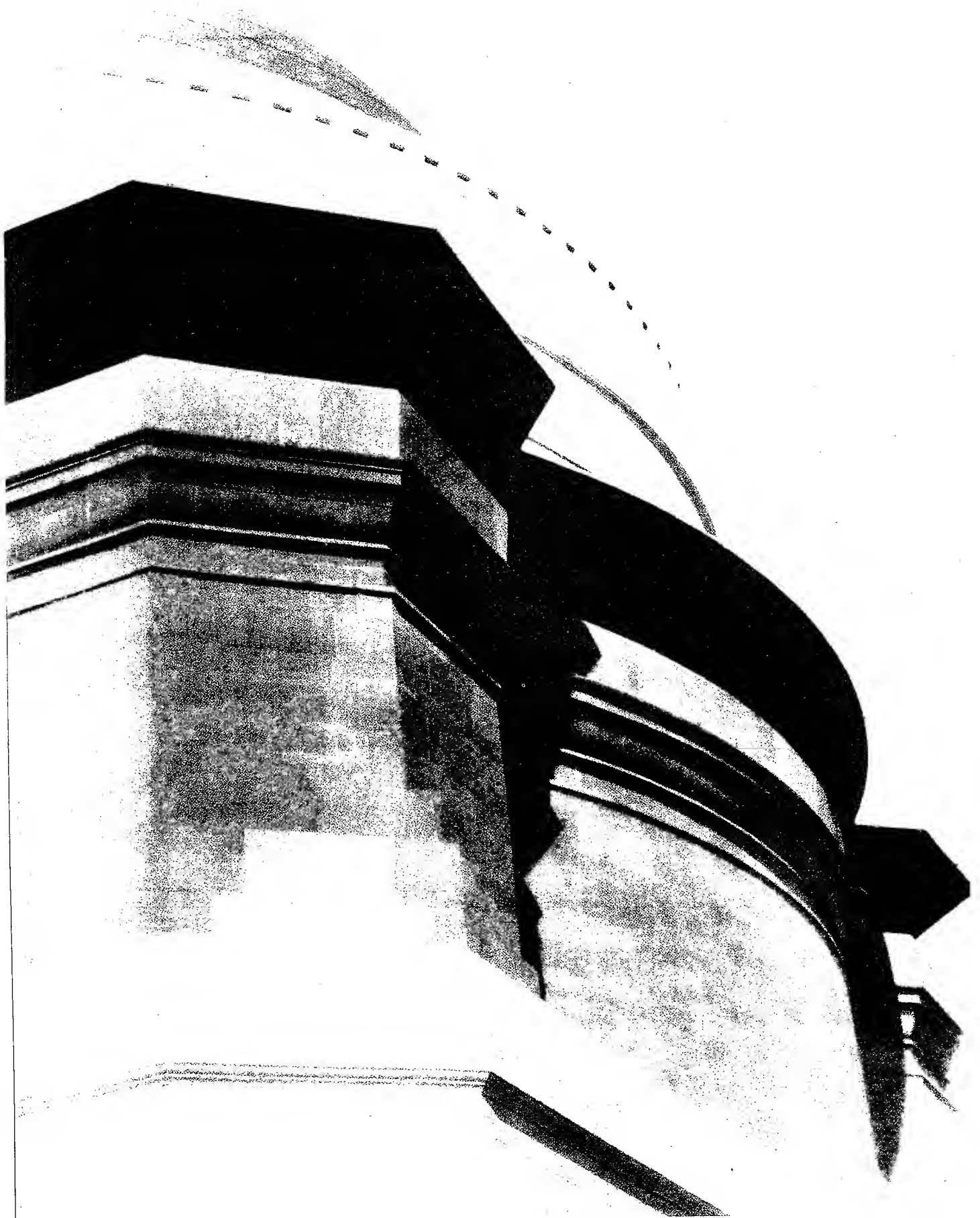


Plate X. January 1931.
*The south courtyard of the Viceroy's House
 with its Scottish sentry. The stone round
 the windows is to be carved and the pillar
 in the pool will support a bronze cobra.*



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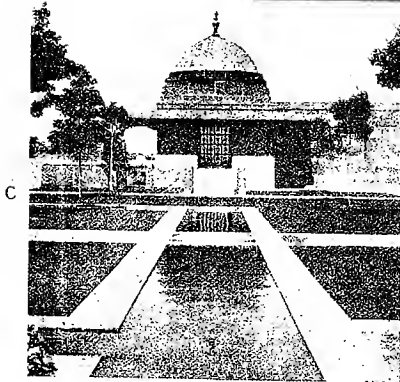
Plate XI. January 1931.
*Fountains on the roof
of the Viceroy's House.*



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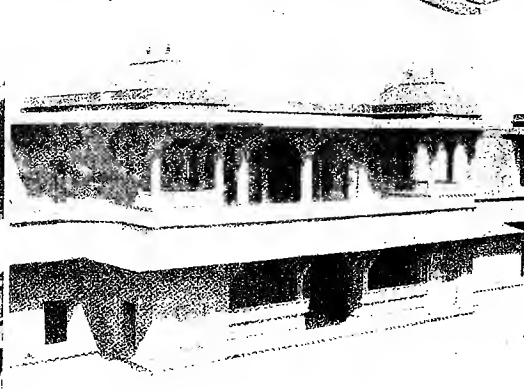
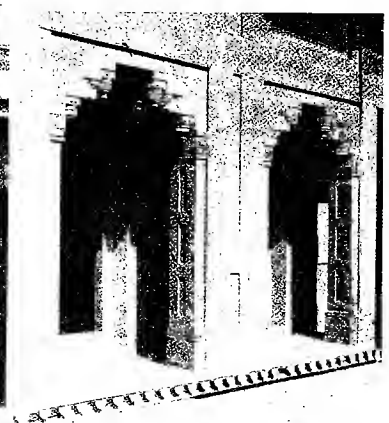
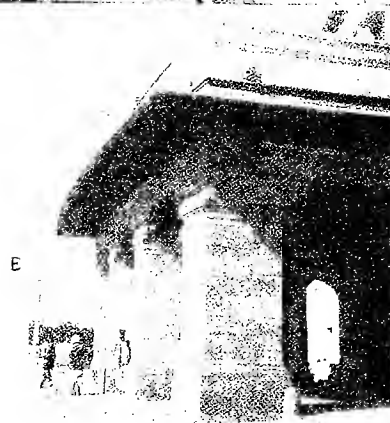
Plate XII. January 1931.
*A detail of the dome
of the Viceroy's House,
showing the turrets,
gallery, and Buddhist
railing motive above.*

COMPARISONS TO ILLUSTRATE THE DERIVATION OF NEW DELHI FROM THE CLASSIC BUILDINGS OF INDIA



A. Lutyens's *chattri* on the *VICEROY'S HOUSE*, showing a small *chujja*. B. A similar instance in the fort at Agra, built by the Emperor Akbar between 1599 and 1605. C. A Lutyens gazebo in the *VICEROY'S GARDEN*. D. A roof-pavilion at *FATEHPUR SIKHRI* (1570-1585).

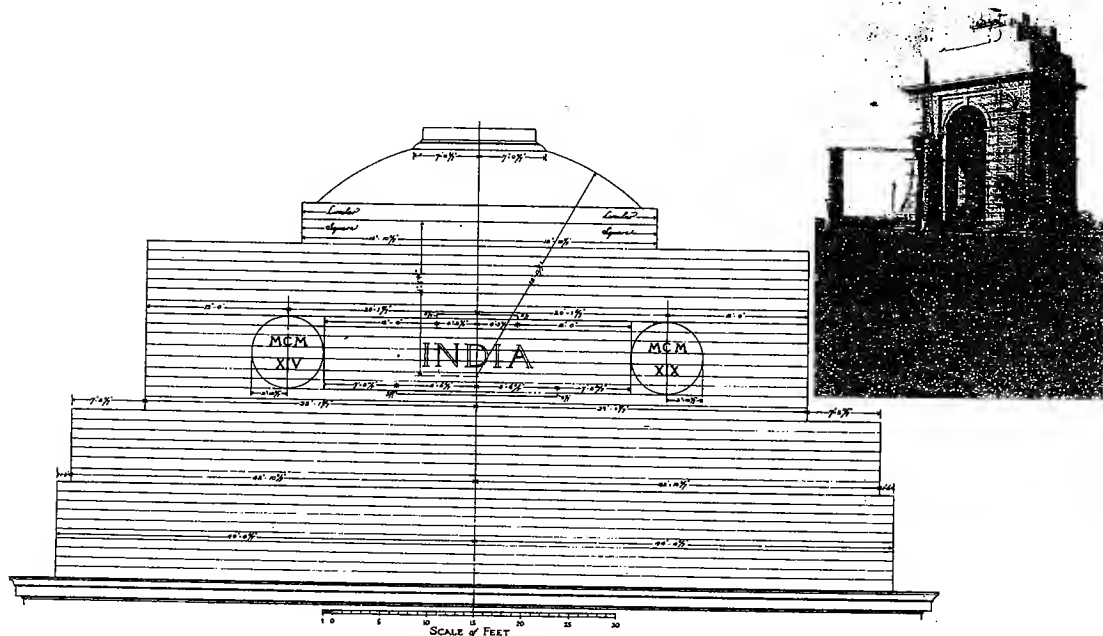
E. Baker's porch to the *COUNCIL CHAMBER* using a Hindu bracket-arch. F. Mogul use of Hindu Arches at *FATEHPUR SIKHRI* (1570-1585). G. Lutyens's use of *chujjas* on the south front of the *VICEROY'S HOUSE*. H. Heavy *chujjas* at *FATEHPUR SIKHRI*.



III.—THE INDIVIDUAL BUILDINGS.

A DETAILED CRITICISM.

IN approaching the main buildings of the city from the standpoint, not of their whole general effect, but of their character as separate entities, the architects' official statement of their aims is worth considering. These aims have been: "to express, within the limits of the medium and the powers of its users, the ideal and fact of British rule in India, of which New Delhi must ever be the monument." It is a sound canon of aesthetics that architecture, above the other arts, should express ideals and facts of this kind. It can do so by two methods; either by writing the ideals and facts in ornament, in crowns, scutcheons, symbolic figures, and their like; or by translating the human spirit, which makes them possible, into architectural form. In the respective works of Sir Herbert Baker and Sir Edwin Lutyens these methods are clearly differentiated. And the city, regarded in the light of objective criticism, is divided between the works of a lesser and a greater architect. That this fact does not obtrude itself on the visitor's first impression is due to the fundamental conditions of material and lay-out laid down by the greater architect. I have tried in Part I to give some idea of this first impression. For only while holding in mind its essential beauty can the virtues and faults of the separate buildings be justly assessed.



The east elevation of the All-India War Memorial Arch. From the roundel on the dome will be propelled the memorial smoke.

THE MEMORIAL ARCH.

The monumental Roman arch can be a futile object, particularly when it happens to be Roman. Here, Sir Edwin Lutyens's adaptation of it supplies a definite need. An axis so spacious as the King's Way, leading to an architectural complex of such size and splendour as the Viceroy's House and the Secretariats, demands an ostentatious beginning. The height of the arch is 138 ft.; but this is increased optically by the system of steps on the roof and the utter flatness of the surrounding plain. Its chief character derives from the fact that the arch of the main opening, although 75 ft. high, springs from a point less than half way up the whole building; so that the arch, as an arch, has something

to support, and is therefore invested with a kind of life, a quality which the Arc de Triomphe, for example, lacks. Close above the key-stone of the archway runs a decorative band of rayed suns, carved flat, but with sufficient emphasis to break the hard line of shadow from the cornice above. The cornice is thin and prominent—unusually so for a monument of this kind. But it is precisely this shelf-like quality which brings it into harmonious relation with the mass of masonry, 40 ft. high, above it. This mass takes the form of three irregular steps, the topmost and deepest of which has its narrow ends interrupted by heavy, concave recesses. On top of this rests a small flat dome, finished with a convex eye, slightly moulded. This dome pays a compliment of gentle imitation to

that of the Viceroy's House, two miles off. But its eventual function will be to emit a huge panache of memorial smoke, which the Public Works Department, slightly despairing, hope to achieve by means of gas and electric fans.

On either side of the topmost step will be incised the words—

MCM INDIA MCM
XIV XIX

The whole arch stands on a low red base. The sides are pierced by two lesser openings, each 54 ft. high, and decorated with stone pineapples above the doorways at the bottom.

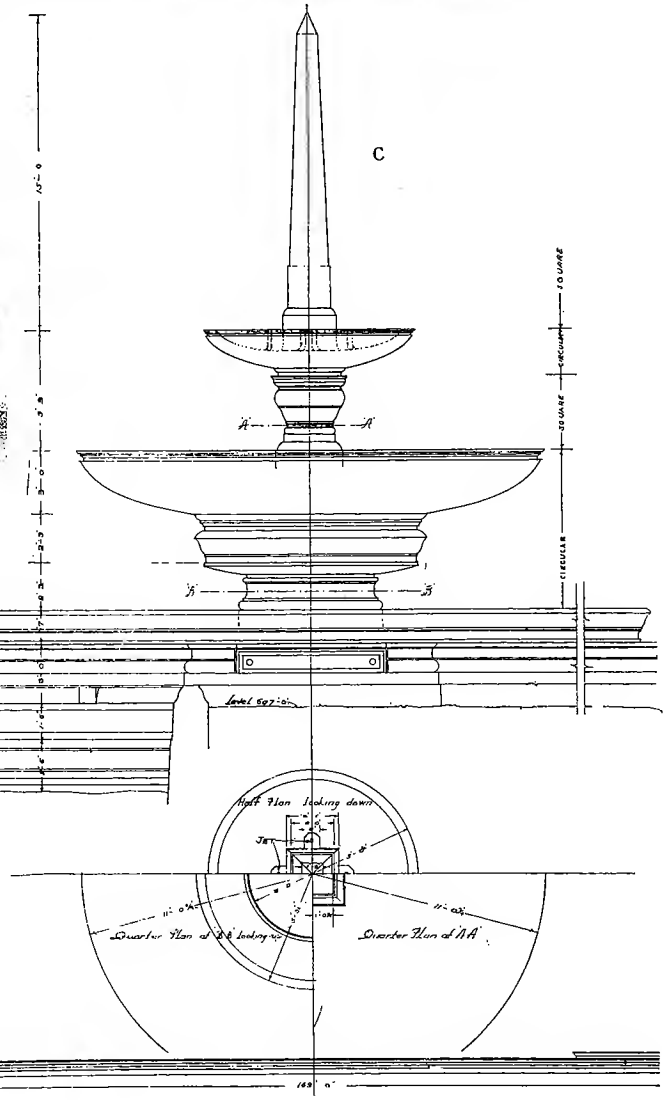
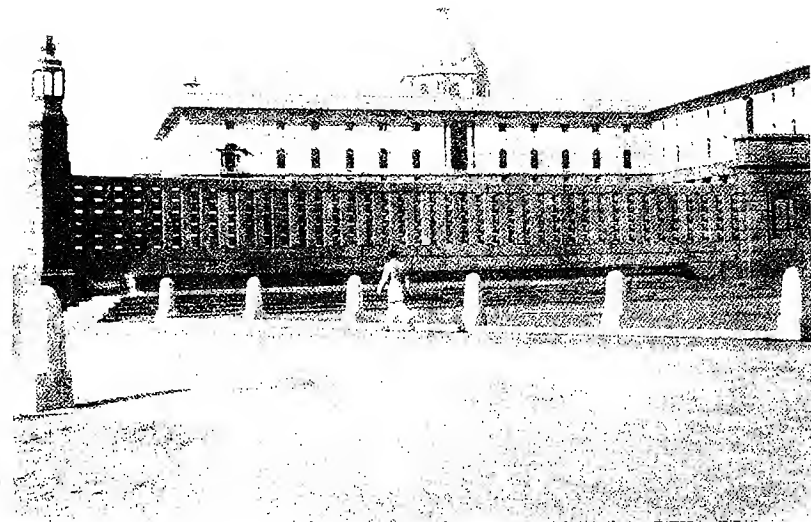
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THE GREAT PLACE.

Excepting the Viceroy's dome, the six fountains by Sir Edwin Lutyens are the most beautiful features of the city. Apart from their clean-dressed rhubarb stone, their character is purely and almost surprisingly European. The perfection of their general proportions, and the superbly acted function of each smallest moulding, can only be rivalled in the Renaissance buildings of Italy. A part of their genius lies in the placing of the water exactly flush with the parapets of the basins, so that the basins appear, not as basins, but as frames to a mirror (Fig. 2, page 2). Seen from the road level, their red ramparts, the height of a man, decorate the Great Place on every side, and their obelisks complete every view. But they were primarily designed to be looked down upon. And it is from the Secretariats that their beauty of shape, given definition by two heavy pieces of masonry where the conjoining basins begin to decrease their width, can best be appreciated. At present the jets of water from the upper saucers are only strong enough to wet half the obelisks above them; from which results a sharp and rather ugly division of colour. But it is hoped that this will be remedied.

Sir Edwin Lutyens has also been responsible for the curving "Buddhist railings," again of red stone, which frame the ends of the Great Place (A). This use of stone, the placing, between flat balusters, of thin convex blocks in length equal to the balusters' width, and permitting horizontal glimpses of daylight, produces the effect of a strawberry basket, and strikes the newcomer as rather eccentric. But it was nevertheless one of the outstanding features of Buddhist building during the early part of the first Christian millennium, and is found at Buddh Gaya, Sanchi, and Anaradjpura in Ceylon. Sir Edwin has lifted the railings upon a heavy base, furnished on the inside with a circular stone seat, and has flanked them, where intersected by roads, with square, lantern-bearing pillars. But the motive is an ugly one in the original, and whether its present adjuncts succeed in making it palatable is hard to decide. On the other hand, it provides precisely what the situation demands: the effect, not of a wall, but of a screen. Perhaps its chief merit is that it has made it possible to avoid the inevitable alternative, an adaptation of Mogul piercing on a large scale. The horrors of this device have been developed by Sir Herbert Baker in his low wall bounding the east approach to the Council Chamber.



A. The Buddhist railings at the south end of the GREAT PLACE, with the South Secretariat and its dome in the background. B. FOUNTAIN OBELISK and DOUBLE BASIN. The jet (for which the Public Works Department is responsible) is inadequate and creates an ugly demarcation between the wet and dry stone. C. A drawing of one of the FOUNTAINS in the Great Place.

THE COUNCIL CHAMBER.

Thus far, the "ideal and fact of British rule in India" have found expression, either in purely Western motives such as the Arch, park, and fountains, or in the purely Indian motive of the Buddhist railings; though it must be said that the extensive use of water, both in landscape and fountain, was always a feature of Mogul taste as well as European. But the stated intention of the architects seems to imply the achievement of a definite fusion, or an attempt at such, between Indian and European motives. On first consideration, this implication may seem fraught with unmentionable dangers. But that it is not necessarily so (despite a balance of probability on the wrong side), may be seen by forgetting the nineteenth century and remembering the charming effect of Chinese themes on European furniture in the eighteenth. Furthermore, it must be obvious, on second thought, that the inhabitants of a country will have solved many problems of comfort, light-value, and the best usage of the available material, peculiar to that country; solutions from which the foreign architect will be foolish not to take lessons, even though he wish, at the same time, to retain his own and his nation's cultural individuality. But there is all the difference in the world between "Fusion" and "Allusion." The first is the use of diverse architectural inventions and ornamental themes, whatever their dates or racial origins, simply for their practical value in creating an artistic unity and in giving effect "to the values of Mass, Space, Line and Coherence in the whole design." The second is the use of these same inventions and themes in a mood of reminiscence—the mood of the nineteenth century—regardless of their relevance to mass, space, line and coherence. The inventions and themes may be virtuous in detachment, but become ineffective and even hideous in conjunction with one another and with the building to which they are attached.

The throwing together of Europe and India has been practised in all the larger buildings of New Delhi, in the Council Chamber, the Secretariats, and the Viceroy's House. Under the direction of Sir Edwin Lutyens a fusion has resulted; for he has divined the human greatness behind the "ideal and fact," behind the co-existence of England and India, and from this Adam has raised up an Eve whose fig-leaves are applied only to increase the beauty of her natural form. Under that of Sir Herbert Baker, the elements have remained separate and allusive: body embryonic; ornament a writing in symbols.

The Council Chamber has been Sir Herbert's unhappiest venture. Its effect from a distance has been described. It resembles a Spanish bull-ring, lying like a mill-wheel dropped accidentally on its side (Figs. 5, 6 and 7, page 4).

From an intermediate distance, however, when the visible arc begins to decrease in length, the building gains in solidity and personality (B, page 19). The red foundation, with its upper band of white, becomes more substantial, and its in-stepping is at last made apparent. Similarly, the pillars of the colonnade above begin to show their true size; though the larger they grow, the more visible is the tiresome irregularity of the windows and entrances in the

plaster wall behind them. Final palliation, the bowler-hatted wart on top disappears.

The various carriage-porches, supported on heavy, bracketed arches of red stone in the Hindu fashion, are not without merit (E, page 15; B and C, page 19). From the brackets depend stone bells, significant of the Indian legend that as long as the bells are silent, so long will the dynasty reign. Above the arches run sloping Mogul *chujjas*, like those of the Viceroy's House, save that here, with the rest of the porch, they follow the main building with a slight curve, which produces an amusing though deformed effect from the side. Above these stand white parapets embellished with classical lions' heads. Some of the porches are surmounted by octagonal *chattris*, whose white-crowned, red-brimmed sun-hats fit them well. Their bodies are white, inset with pierced screens of red stone. Similar screens of white stone break the attic storey at the top of the building.

Once inside the colonnade (D, page 19), the effect of a curved gallery, whose massive pillars, divided into black and white by the outward sun, portend that at some remote spot the curve will meet itself and form a circle, and that the zebra'd inner wall of cream plaster will do likewise, produces an impressive sensation of size and novelty. But—and there is a but in every feature of this building—the broad sweep of the gallery is here and there deliberately interrupted by doorless entrances, entirely purposeless, which consist of two small pillars supporting a lintel, on top of which rests a semi-circle of fretted stone (F, page 19). At points where it is desired to 'denote a porch without, three or four pillars in the colonnade are joined together by equally absurd screens of masonry which are also adorned with panels of fretwork. The shadow and silhouette effects of these devices resemble the openwork stockings of Edwardian actresses.

The exigencies of constitutional discussion have obliged Sir Herbert Baker to divide the interior of the Council Chamber into three courtyards of peculiar, and indeed fantastic, shape, each of which discloses a section of a pivotal circular building in the centre. They deserve careful study. For they epitomize all that New Delhi might have been; and all that New Delhi, owing to Sir Edwin Lutyens, is not.

Surmounting the cupola of the central building, the wartlike cupola already observed from without, the royal crown of England is reared into the sky on a red stalk (G, page 19). We shall see this again; and also the white bowler hat, flat-brimmed like that of a foreign Jesuit, from which it rises. This hat is Sir Herbert's adaptation of the roof of a Mogul *chattri* into a more European form. It is here supported by a ring of decorated pillars hung with stone pants. The whole rests on an eye, which balances precariously on a grooved white drum. This dome, which forms the entire roof of the plaster gasometer beneath it, rises from within a heavy parapet-cornice, accompanied by a spawn of subsidiary *chattris*. Below the cornice falls a heavy shadow, which, with various ribs, emphasizes the circular character of the supporting wall. The latter's bottom zone has been dented with classical niches, between which are placed a series of front doors in Kensington (I, page 19), embellished with sweeping Mogul cornices and supporting, on their

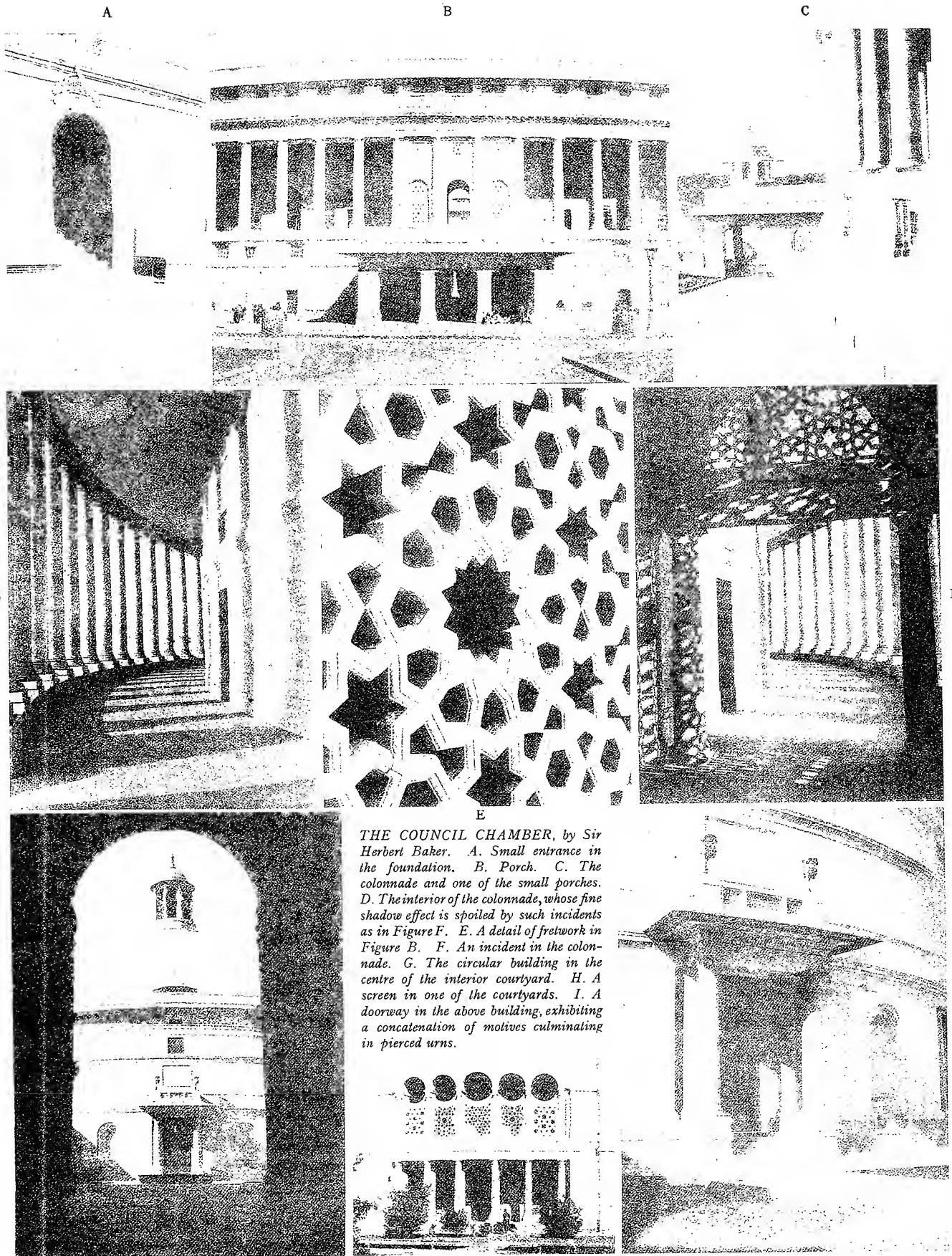
fretted balconies, pairs of three-legged urns, whose suspended bodies are so pierced as to consist almost entirely of air. More grotesque ornaments than these elaborately porous containers can scarcely have been devised in any age or style.

The three structures which lie tangent both to the central circular building and the inner wall of the outer ring, thus forming the three courtyards, exhibit curved walls of cream plaster divided into two storeys, each of which is arched; the bottom with red pillars; the top with white, off which spring a succession of small arches (H, page 19). In between these latter pillars are hung fretted stone panels, not rectangular, but curving upwards at the upper corners, as though fixed by clothes pegs on a line. Here are not only pants, but petticoats, camisoles, night-dresses, and even tea-gowns. In the final parapet yet other fretted panels have been inset, highly coloured in a manner believed by designers of American bars to be that of the East.

The art of piercing stone, as practised by the Moguls, was only fully successful when undertaken by the finest craftsmen. There is a vast difference between the exquisite marble screens of the Taj Mahal, whose every curve bears the impress of an artist's feeling, and the casual out-of-doors panels used in Mogul times for gardens and terraces. The latter are flat and coarse, and are redeemed from ugliness only by the patina and lichens of age. For the essential condition of success in this art is that the depth of the piercing—that is to say, of the whole panel—shall always be greater than the width, on the face of the panel, of any part of the tracery. The resulting pattern of light or dark is thus made subtle and delicate, since it changes with the movements of the beholder. Even had he wished, Sir Herbert Baker could scarcely have found modern craftsmen capable of reviving this old technique. But evidently he has not wished. Not content with allowing his fretwork to be executed on thin panels, in coarse art-school patterns, by workmen whose ideal is a machine-like uniformity, he has even been at pains to incise and round off the edges of the tracery (E, page 19), thus destroying any illusion of depth that might have remained. And when, in addition, his fretwork is contorted from its proper panel form into frames of inebriate curves, the general effect is disconcerting in the extreme. And why, because the Mogul builders used pierced stone as a means of giving at once light and shade to their rooms, must he attach string-purses to the rims of classical urns? It is necessary to insist on these eccentric proclivities of his at some length, since they reappear in the Secretariats, and they illustrate the difficulty of achieving that fusion of architectural themes which the ideal and fact of British rule in India demand.

The harshness of this criticism may be mitigated by remembering that to place four separate chambers in a given circle is not easy, and that the interior courtyards bear the stamp of drastic economy. But the visitor can only wish that the economy had been still more drastic; and that the architect could have contented himself with effects purely structural and gasometric, instead of lavishing the small harvest of Indian taxes on a permanent imitation of Drury Lane harem scenes.

¹ G. Scott. *The Architecture of Humanism*, ed. 1929, p. 56.



THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, by Sir Herbert Baker. A. Small entrance in the foundation. B. Porch. C. The colonnade and one of the small porches. D. The interior of the colonnade, whose fine shadow effect is spoiled by such incidents as in Figure F. E. A detail of fretwork in Figure B. F. An incident in the colonnade. G. The circular building in the centre of the interior courtyard. H. A screen in one of the courtyards. I. A doorway in the above building, exhibiting a concatenation of motives culminating in pierced urns.

THE SECRETARIATS.

The manner in which, as the visitor comes up the King's Way, the front towers first appear on the inside of, then cut across, and finally enclose, the central domes, has been described. That this effect is not entirely satisfactory cannot in fairness be laid at Sir Herbert Baker's door. In his original design, the towers were to have been twice their present height. By lowering the towers to such an extent, their tops have been brought into relation with those of the domes, so that the sky-line of the group at first describes a convex arc, and afterwards, from closer to, a concave. Had the towers risen as was intended, they would have been divorced from the sky-line of the group altogether, simply cutting through it and assuming the character of isolated sentinels. It has been suggested that when the demands for economy were presented, the domes, rather than the towers, should have been reduced. The domes might have been abolished; though this would have been a tragedy, since they add greatly to the general effect of the group and the city. But to have reduced their size would have made them ridiculous. As it is, they barely escape being too small for the enormous piles of buildings beneath them.

Apart from these domes (considered without their detail), Sir Herbert Baker's most effective contribution to New Delhi has been the east foundations of the Secretariats, those, in other words, which support the end-façades and face down the King's Way. They dominate the Great Place and the central approach; and, by their absence of irritating ornament, they display to the utmost the ripe and massive beauty of the dressed red sandstone of which they are built. It is impossible to insist too frequently or too strongly on the intense depth of colour with which this stone enchants the eye—a mixture of blood, rhubarb, and burnt orange.



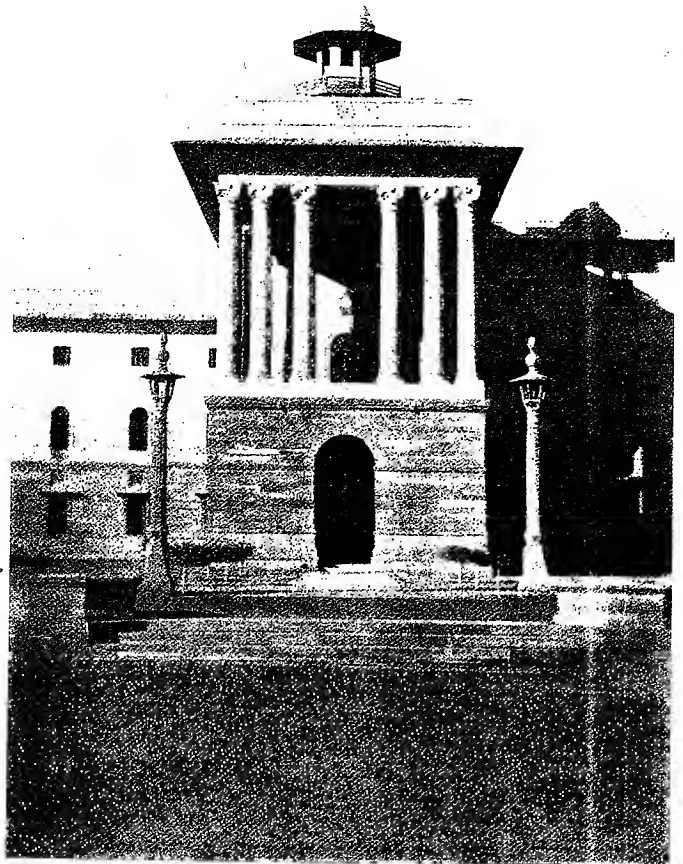
The circular temple above the Great Place, in front of the SECRETARIATS.

Set back from the end-façades, at a distance nearly equal to the latter's width, run long wings, north and south, outward from the main axis of the city's design. The line of the east foundations is carried outward in front to an equal distance by a solid red wall, which eventually turns a right-angled corner and goes up to meet the back wings, forming an invisible courtyard. So solidly devised is this wall that it seems as if it must support a platform—an illusion which, optically, still further increases the dimensions and artificial character of the Raisina Hill. Where the pillared extensions of the end-façades leave the foundation, they do so flush with it, their upper foundations, which carry on the red foundation-line of the higher side-levels of the fronts, being relieved only by plain arched entrances. The wall between the extensions is recessed. Below this, in each main foundation, are cut three more arched entrances, approached by a semicircular flight of steps (Plate VI). The line of the main foundation, moving inward, then passes the corner of the building above it, to descend in a gigantic zig-zag balustrade, behind which a broad flight of steps gives approach to the platform above (Plate VII).

are sparse and sane, and are well calculated to increase the effect of ponderous, almost fortified, solidity and stupendous labour. Along the sides of the trough, immediately beneath the parapets of the sunk walls, have been inset a series of excellent wall-lights, projecting hexagons ingeniously framed in stout stone baskets.

This building fills the would-be admirer with regrets. No sooner has he begun to enjoy the massive severity of the east foundations than he is pulled up short by the concentration, in one spot, of all the reminiscence, allusion, and sentiment from which the architect has been so righteously refraining. At the corners of the platforms through which the gradient in its trough ascends, stand two structures to which the names temples, *chattris*, bandstands, or municipal fountains, may equally well be applied (see above). As structures they are needed; and from a distance, at least, their existence is better than their absence. But on coming

A pillared extension (one of four) on the north front of the SECRETARIATS.



Behind the steps, another wall of equal height and character continues to support the platform of the hill, till it turns inwards, at right-angles, to form the trough up which runs the central gradient leading to the Viceroy's House. Throughout these foundations and walls, the ribs and mouldings

up to them, one recoils from a welter of unrelated motives such as form those "composite" tunes played by military bands. As may be seen from Figs. A and B on page 15, the beauty of the original Mogul *chattris*, and of those borrowed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, lies in the unity, the sense of *growth* with which the mouldings and angles of bi-coloured stone invest their slender suggestions of shade. To provide this suggestion, whose comfort to the eye can only be imagined by those who know India, a thin sloping *chueja* must be used; and to bring such a *chueja* into unity with the little roof above it, and the slender legs below it, requires a nicely cultivated architectural sanity. This virtue, admirably expressed in the massive foundations, now recedes before the exigencies of imperial symbolism. Instead of carefully building up his roof and cornice from below, Sir Herbert Baker plumps down a hat from above. The Council Chamber's Jesuit bowl has been remarked on. Here this theme is repeated. Again, a white crown of England, supported on a red stalk of Greek acanthus leaves, sits the head-covering of an Italian priest. For ribbon has been substituted a kind of red chair-braid—*passenterie* is the milliner's term. Then comes the flat brim. This rises from eight couples of octagonal pillars placed on a circular pyramid of steps, moulded in Hindu fashion, and strung with chains of flat bells. From the pillars, which stand behind one another, rise inverted coffins, pointing inwards towards the centre, upon each of which tucks a heavily caparisoned elephant whose trunk uplifts a classical wreath. From

in between these animals spring small arches, which, assisted by further coffins on top of the elephants, uphold the hat.

The eastern ends of the Secretariats and their foundations have been analysed at some length, in view of the predominant part played by them in a first impression of the city. A few final details must be added. The pillars of the facades, though their cornices are over-rich, form pleasant and imposing clusters. A red escutcheon and a machicolated balcony, both irritating, disturb the severity of the recessed walls between the extensions where the pillars stand. In line with these details rise the white towers. These, owing to the demands of public economy, have been robbed of their proper character, save at the top, where yet other bowler hats, each with its encoronated finial, sit uneasily on medleys of pillarettes.

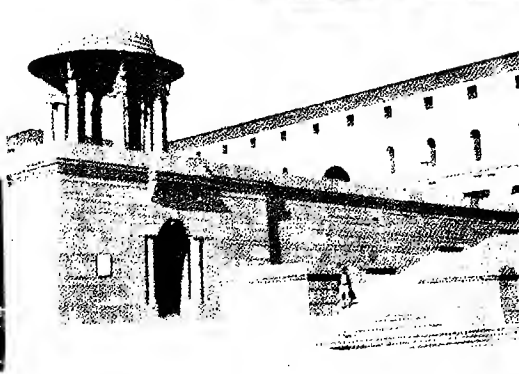
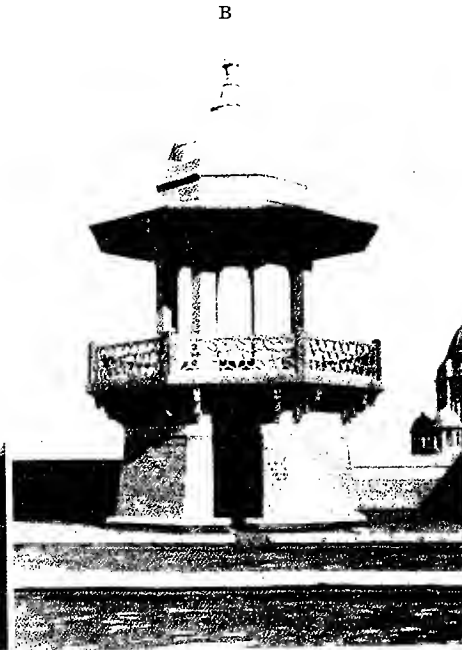
The inner sides of the Secretariats, 391 yards in length, and broken each by four pillared extensions similar to those end-facades (Plate II), are for the most part blessedly plain. The extensions stand in couples. In between the couples, the body of the building is set back so as to allow a better view of the dome above. Above the parapets of the two extensions which flank this inset stand small octagonal *chattris* finished with halconies of red crochets.

In the centre of the inset walls, below the domes, Sir Herbert Baker has made the great mistake of introducing Mogul doorways (D). Mogul architecture is entirely scenic and two-dimensional; and to interpolate upon a building of square blocks and heavy shadows a great flat mosque entrance, a tall arch framed in a rectangular inlay of red, whose corners, between those of the inlay and the curves of the arch, are decorated with red rosettes, may be a bold, but is scarcely a successful, venture.

Above these entrances rise the domes, excellent,

though not original, in shape, but repellent in detail. Again the British crown calls heaven to witness it from stalk and cupola; though here Sir Herbert has substituted a Spanish toreador's hat for that of the humble clerk previously favoured. Each dome sits well on its round drum. But the goodness of the effect is interrupted by a gaggle of elephants' heads encircling the parapet of each base. Below these properties descend coupled pillars, between which round arches are hung with a further selection of underwear; this time upside down and red.

A. A *chattri* on the TAJ MAHAL (1630-1652), showing the decadence of Mogul building. B. A Baker *chattri* on the SECRETARIATS.



C. The front of the NORTH SECRETARIAT, showing the detail of the dome and the central recess with its Mogul doorway.

D. The supporting wall of the garden platform in front of the NORTH SECRETARIAT viewed from the GREAT PLACE. In front is the approach to the steps.

The four attendant *chattris*, ill squeezed in at the bottom, are similarly graced; though their garments hang from a natural clothes line as in the Council Chamber courtyards.

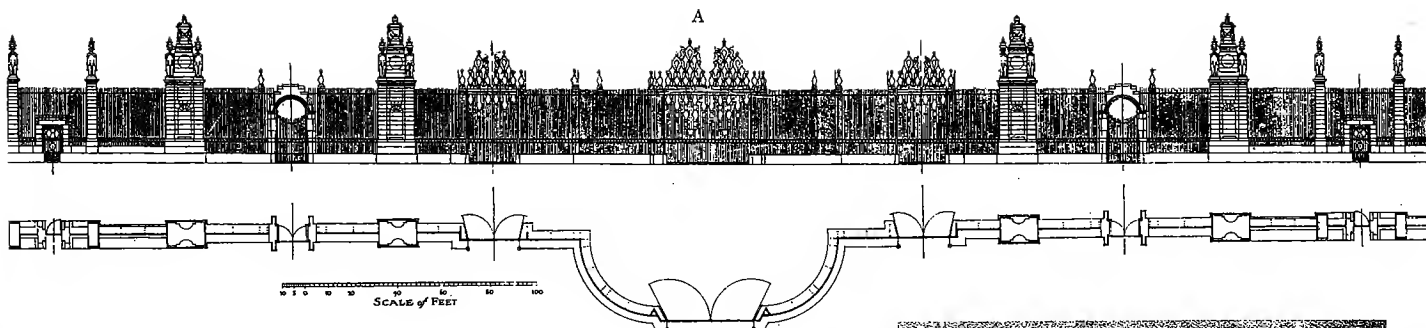
From the outside, the backs of the Secretariats, here descending to the lower level of the surrounding plain, are successful where there is no ornament, and the colonnades that occupy the third and fourth storeys of the projecting wings make a pleasant break in the severe red and white walls. But the main entrances beneath the domes exhibit a piled confusion. Corresponding with those on the inside appear two more flat Mogul archways. But owing to the extra height, these contain, not entrances, but machicolated Romeo balconies and large basins, underneath which small black apertures threaten access to Etruscan tombs. As on the inside, the walls containing these archways are heavily recessed.

In front, giving entrance to the courtyard thus formed, stand horseguard lodges surmounted by squatter bowlers than usual and embellished with flat elephants at the spring of the arches.

At length we reach the other end-facades, facing west towards the Viceroy's house, and again exhibiting pillared extensions and heavy foundations to raise them from the lower level of the plain. Here ornament is entirely lacking; and viewed from afar, the huge buildings, with their succession of wings and dotted rows of windows, attain, despite their gay colour, something of the austere merit of the Escorial. The story is famous of how Philip II supervised in person the building of that monastic palace, and of how, with his own lips, he used to order the workmen to remove the ornament prescribed by the architect. We can

only regret that the ghost of that austere monarch was not present during the building of New Delhi. And with the sad reflection that we cannot admire all his work here, we take leave of Sir Herbert Baker.¹

¹ Until we happen to walk up Aldwych. There, in India House, all the familiar motives reappear. Underwear screens, carved by Battersea workmen from Dundee stone, conceal Georgian windows. Elephants and bells vie with the ridiculous devices of British Indian heraldry. A large part of the interior is executed in a pale red stone, colour of diluted gregory powder, which, the janitor insists, has been exactly matched with that of the Taj Mahal. In support of his contention he points to one of the fretted panels in this colour, which was quarried in Agra. Actually, the red stone of the Taj is of a crimson bloodiness even deeper than that of New Delhi. And the visitor to India House should pay no credit to the implied statement that the stone of the imperial capital in any way resembles its pallid travesty here.

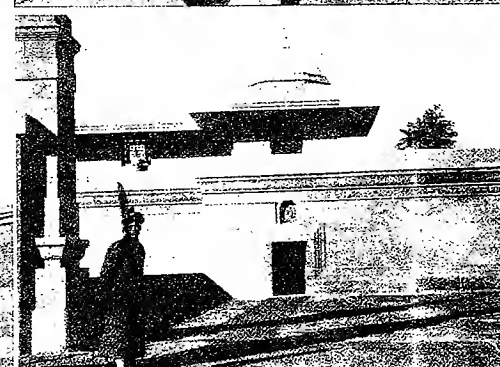
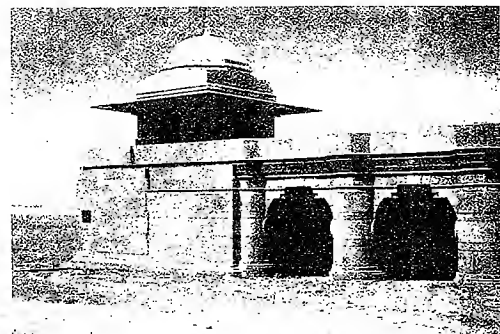
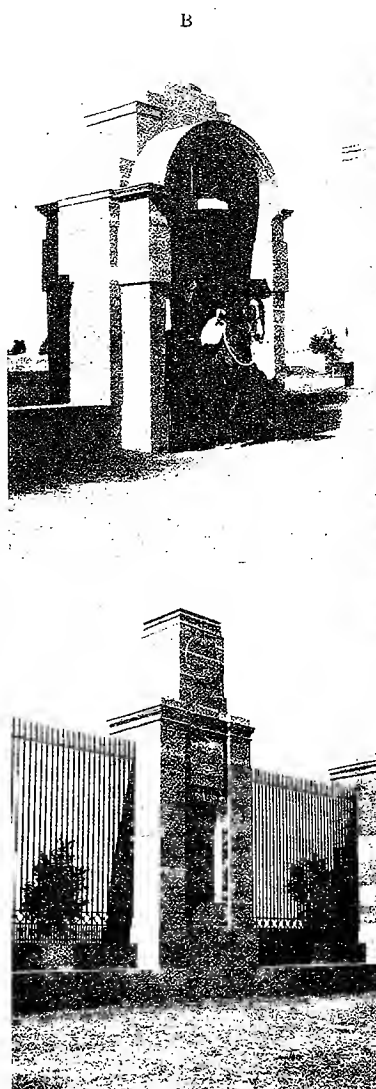


THE VICEROY'S COURT.

To turn from the Secretariats to the Viceroy's House is to be transported from a concert of popular classics to a performance of a new and original symphony by an orchestra such as the Viennese Philharmonic. The metaphor is a just one. For, in the last analysis, Sir Edwin Lutyens's distinction as an architect is found in the absolute precision with which his every external ornament is made to contribute to the general harmony and to accentuate, or modify, the form of the general mass.

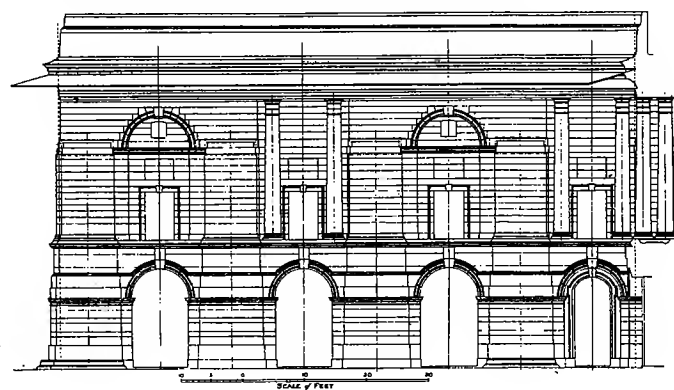
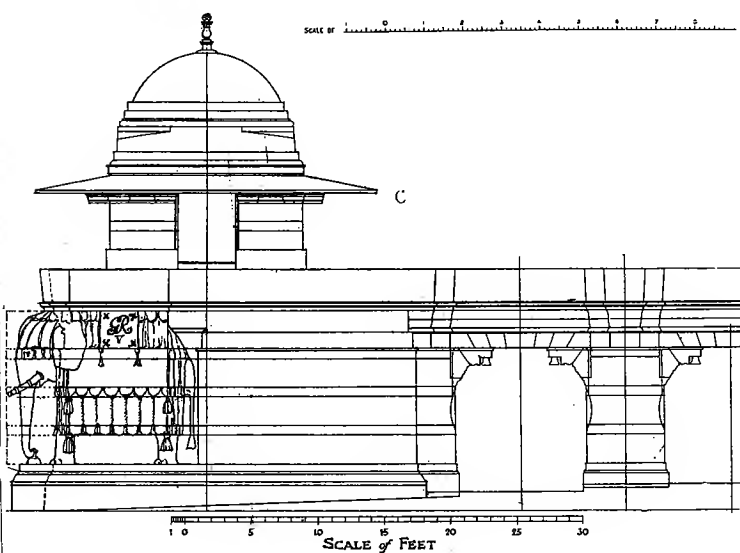
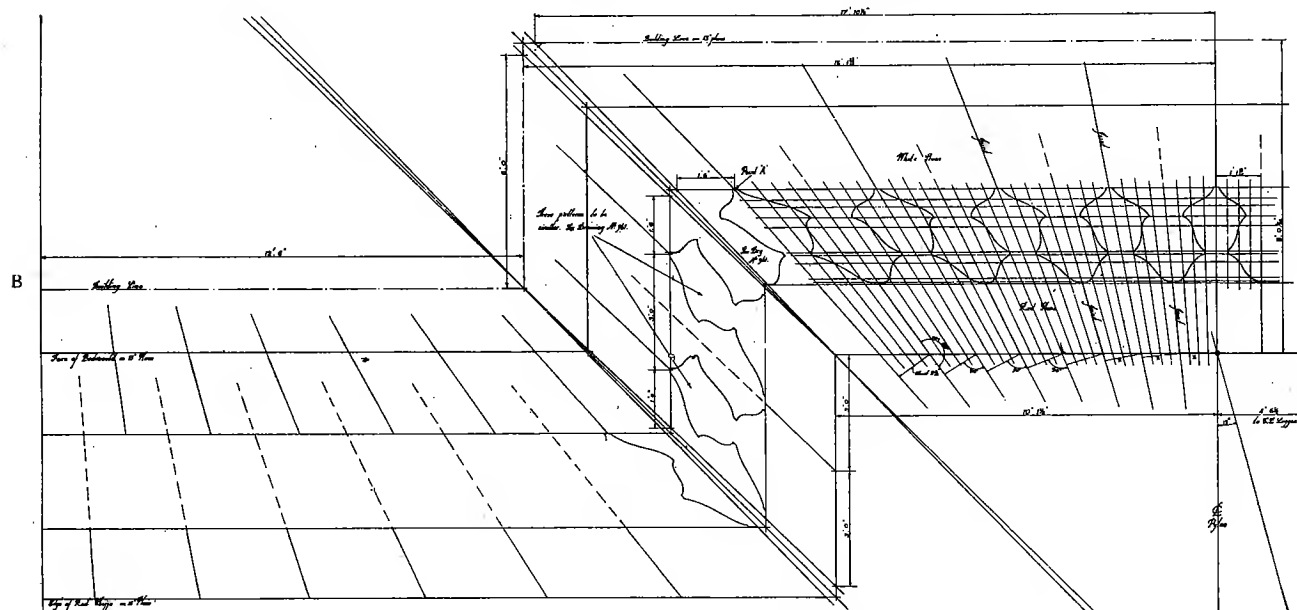
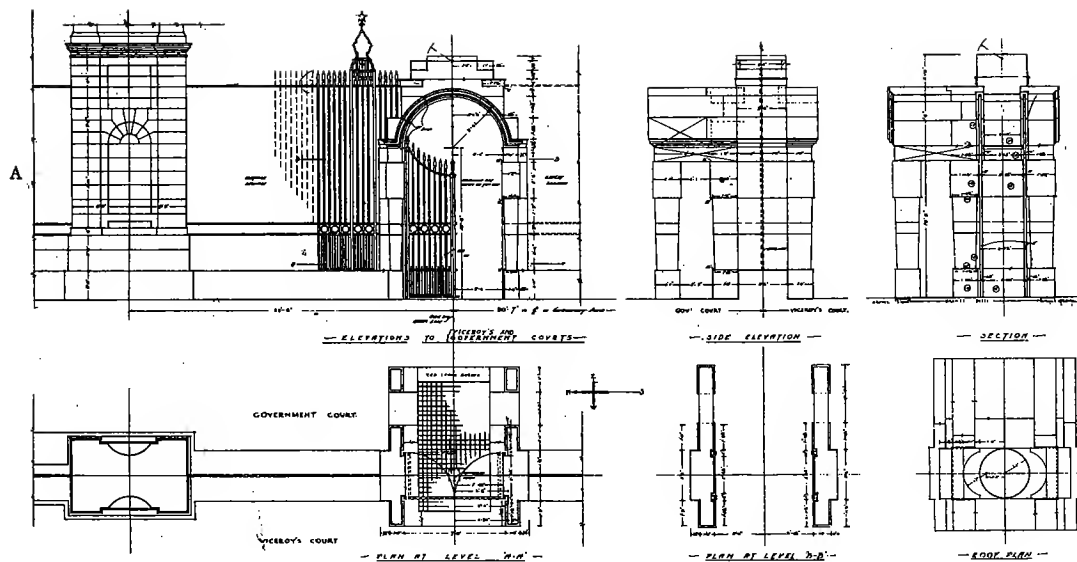
The iron screen across the front of the courtyard, when I saw it, was unfinished. Its larger piers are to bear lamp-holding elephants, whose advent, after the recent experience of these animals on the Secretariats, must necessarily be regarded with some apprehension. The most ingenious feature of the screen is the horse-guard boxes, deep shady arches of almost cardboard thinness, but bound, buttressed, and surmounted by heavy blocks of stone; so that each whole appears to have been carved from a lump of living rock (A and B).

The features of the courtyard—Jaipur column, sunk drives, and basket lanterns—have been enumerated. On either side of it the ground falls to a lower level; and its platform is there upheld by sunk walls, 16 ft. high, and built with a convergent "batter" to take the weight of the massive outset moulding along the top. These walls are broken by a lateral drive. The points of intersection are marked by pairs of superb gazebos—each consisting of a white hemisphere, on a red octagon, on a red square, on a red square Mogul *chujja*, on four squat red piers, between which, so far hidden by shadow as to be almost invisible, are placed square pierced screens (D, E and F). Where the walls turn inwards, towards the Jaipur column, they are transformed into squat cloisters, supported on fat round pillars, from whose tops springing brackets give each arch-way a Hindu character (D). The angles of the walls are diversified with a play of crude blocks whose pattern of light and shadow might have been designed by Picasso. Might; for the blocks are now being carved into elephants. Beyond the pairs of gazebos the walls continue again till they celebrate the approach to the house with similar gazebos, only here single (F). Beneath each of these, low doorways are embraced by the base mould of the wall, which rises in rectangular shape to accomplish this. The walls are then set back so as to meet the extra foundation of the house necessitated by the lower level. Above these set-backs, before the house is actually reached, are further set back other and smaller walls, shaded by *chujjas* similar to, and grown out of, the cornices of the gazebos (Plate IX). These cornices, and the galleries thus formed, are continued right across the north and the south sides of the house, save where interrupted by the north entrance and the south courtyard. But for its necessary doorways and windows, the extra foundation of the house on these sides repeats exactly the character of the sunk walls below the courtyard; so that, viewed from below, the house and court are one thing—as though the house, seating its body and erecting its head, had stretched out its legs to enclose the court; at the same time placing its arms behind it, with the hands closed, to envelop a garden of whose existence the reader is not yet aware.



A. A drawing of part of the screen and railing to the VICEROY'S COURT. B. A horse-guard box in the screen to the VICEROY'S COURT. These have since been enlarged,

to give more shade, by the addition of square pillars in front; and a corresponding extension of the vaulted roofs. The stone blocks are to be disfigured by carving. C. A stone post in the screen to the VICEROY'S COURT. This and its fellows will bear lamp-holding elephants by Jagger. D. A guard-house in the VICEROY'S COURT, with a gazebo and "Norman-Hindu" arches. E. A detail of the gazebo. F. A gazebo on the supporting wall of the VICEROY'S COURT at the point where it begins to be recessed so as to join the house. Notice the doorway contained in the uprisen base mould.



THE VICEROY'S HOUSE : OUTSIDE.

The various excellences of the front of the Viceroy's House, and of the dome above it, have been discussed in Part I. Once again, the tremendous size of the whole must be emphasized. Fortunately, human sentries are always present, beneath the central portico or beside the plinths under the statues of the King and Queen, to furnish the bewildered eye with a scale of measurement.

The detail, where it exists, should be studied at length. In particular the roofs of the small *chattris* along the parapet provide a striking example of the complicated system of mouldings employed by the architect to obtain the simultaneous effects of growth and simplicity (A, page 15, and B, page 26). The plinths of the fountains exhibit an opposite principle: that of great steps of stone, thrust apparently at random on top of one another, but so arranged as to produce a carefully calculated dovetailing of light and shadow (C, page 25). Another interesting feature is the capital employed on the pillars of the main portico. In shape, this resembles the head-piece of a caryatid, swollen round the middle by a corrugated band, and supporting, after a slight interval, a flat mortar-board from whose corners depend the stone bells that will preserve the dynasty. This theme, though excellently proportioned, is endowed with a negative quality out of keeping with the essentially positive character of the building it adorns (see drawing, page 29).

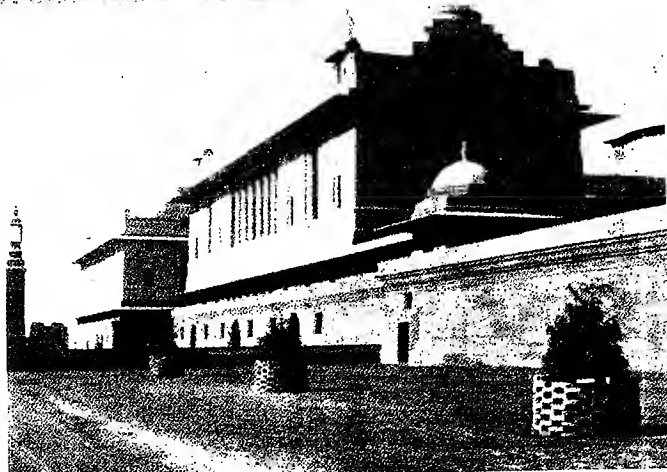
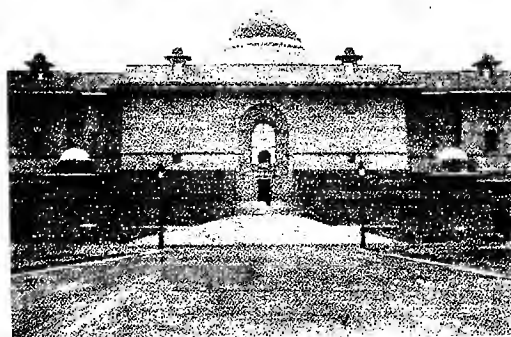
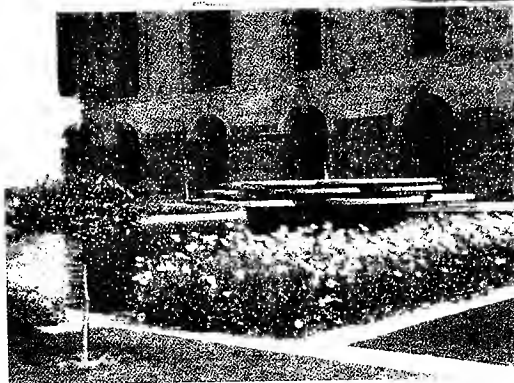
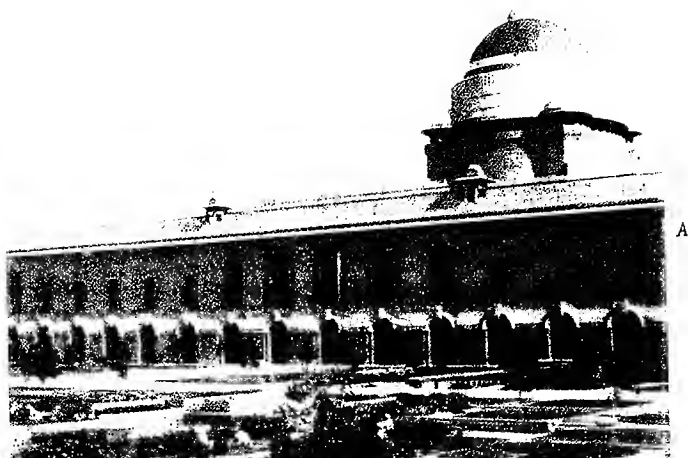
The detail of the dome has already been examined. The hemisphere (without its base mould), and the patterned white drum beneath, derive their shape from the Buddhist *stupas* of Sanchi. The turrets, in essence, derive from the European Middle Ages. Their caps derive from the Moguls; and likewise the form, though not the course, of the all-round *chujja*. The remaining elements seem to lack historic precedent. But in reality, as they stand here, none of them has any precedent whatever. Amidst all the cacophony of standardized allusion and whining reminiscence which the present age calls art, Lutyens's dome strikes a clear note of true æsthetic invention. To have seen it is to carry for ever a new enjoyment, and to add one more to those little separate flames of pleasure whose treasured aggregate alone gives purpose to existence.

From me, feeling thus, criticism would come amiss. I will only append the comments of the architect himself. It strikes him, he says, that the diameter of the upper half of the white drum beneath the dome is too large; he would like to take a foot off the circumference all round, thus modifying the step between it and the dome. And it also seems to him that the whole base of the dome rises too sharply from the immensely long parapet beneath it. This he believes can be rectified by a low wall between the fountains on either side of the portico, together with corresponding walls on the opposite side of the house and across it. The first of these suggested improvements is naturally out of the question. Whether the second will be carried out is not yet decided.

The south side of the house consists of two great wings, each of which projects eastwards and westwards, into the Viceroy's Court or Garden, from the main axis of the building (D, and Plate IX). These wings have the same character as the front, being flanked each by couples of pylonic blocks, between which (couples) runs a colonnade. The addition to the foundation, with its delicious gallery beneath a second *chujja*, has been described. In between the two wings, immediately beneath the dome, and so as to show it, is a deep recess whose architecture is of a different character. This differentiation satisfies the eye—as if the skin of an orange had been peeled off to reveal the pigs beneath. A Hindu cloister, similar to those in the sunk walls of the courtyard, gives entrance to the bowels of the house. Above, the windows are framed in an elaborate system of pilasters and plaques (A, page 25). These, at present coarse and ugly, will be carved into more delicate forms by Indian workmen. A similar system of ornament, similarly placed and awaiting similar improvement, graces the courtyard within (Plate X).

The north front presents a design after the same plan as that of the south with its two side wings, save that, in place of the recess just described, there is outset a huge pylonic entrance-block, blind but for a tall central niche which contains a small doorway at the bottom (C). On either side of the niche, in the red foundations, the Buddhist railing motive re-appears. A splayed flight of steps leads to the entrance, flanked by two piles of red masonry similar to the supporting walls of the Viceroy's court, and bearing similar red and white gazeboes.

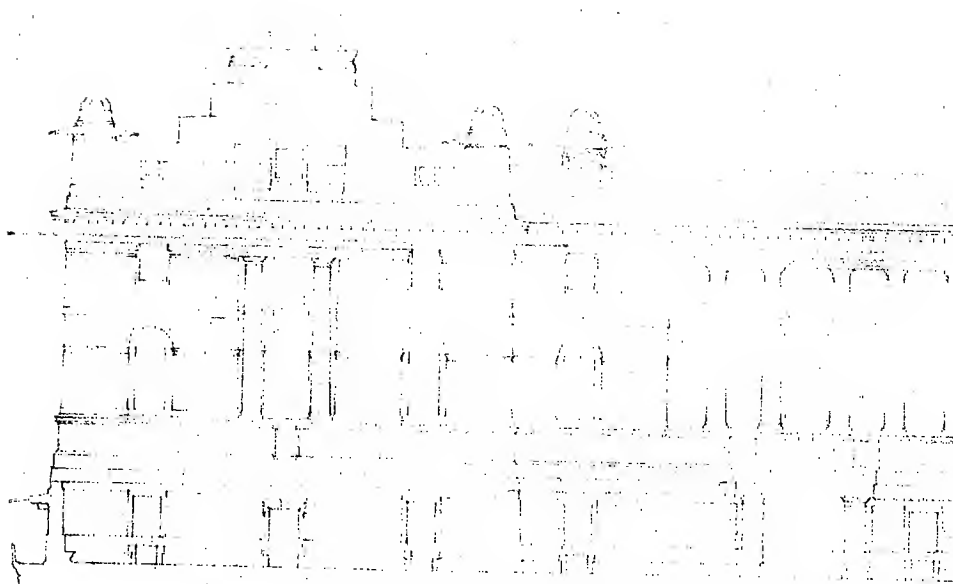
There remains only the garden front, facing west, a façade of perfect severity, a background for flowers and trees (A). From either side protrudes a wing such as those of the main front, but shorter; for the garden front stands farther from the dome than its opposite. From the parapets of the ends of these wings rise two more fountains. But on the parapet of the front itself, there



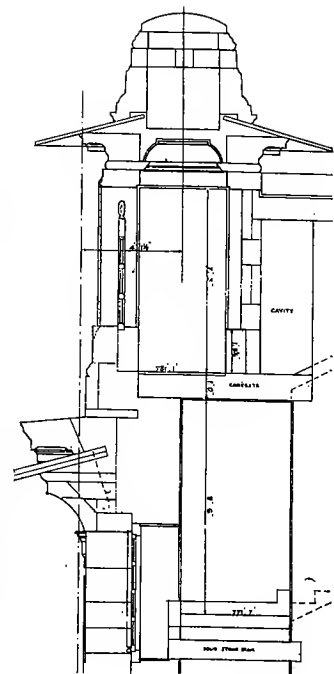
is no ornament, no break whatsoever, with the exception of two small *chattris* and two extra feet of heightening directly beneath the dome. The sweep of the *chujja* underneath, with its dotted line of contact above and its heavy black shadow below, stretching the whole length of the house without interruption, is almost forbidding in its ruthless pursuit of distance.

The red foundations, of wings and body alike, are broken by heavy archways, nearly similar to those in front (B, page 25). Along the central façade they number nineteen, each of which is finished at the top with a lace pelmet of red stone; odious, were it visible from without, which it is not; but charmingly frivolous when viewed from within as setting to a garden prospect.

A. The west front of the VICEROY'S HOUSE, with the sun coming over. B. The same, showing the fountain reproduced on Plate XIII. C. The north entrance of the VICEROY'S HOUSE with flanking gazeboes. D. South front of the VICEROY'S HOUSE, showing the east and west wings.

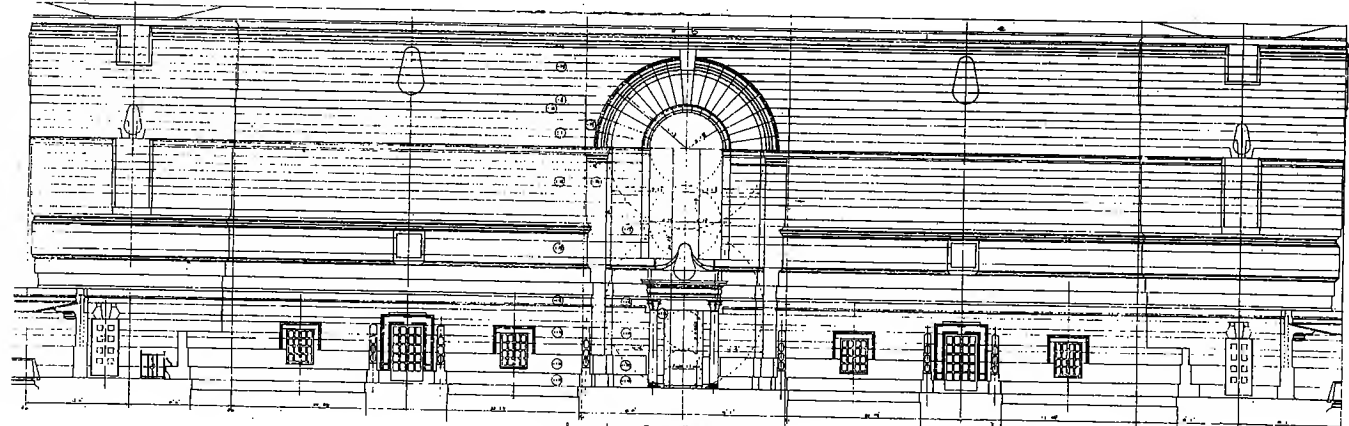


A

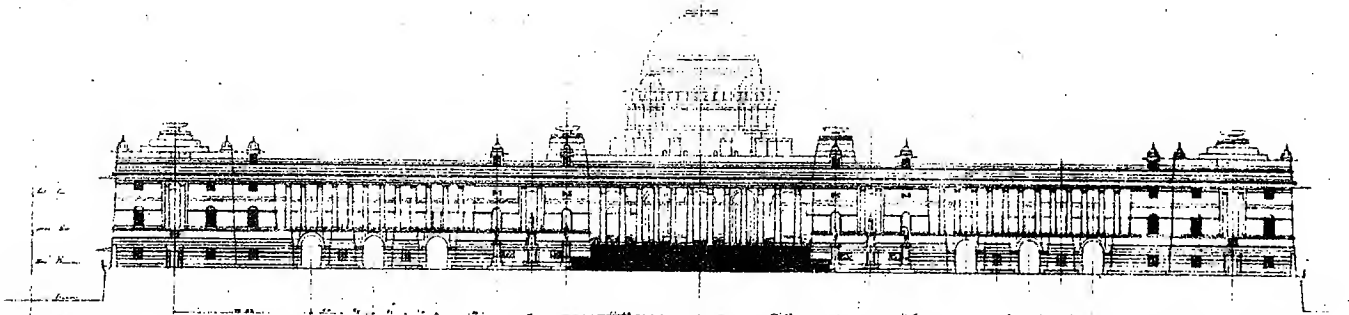


B

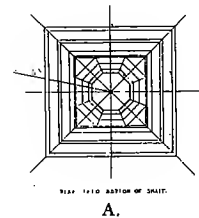
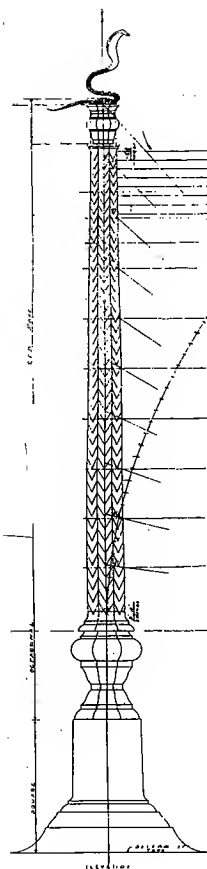
A. Part of the east elevation of the VICEROY'S HOUSE. B. A chattri by the south portico fountain of the VICEROY'S HOUSE. Note the take-off of the chujja below. C. Elevation of the north front, showing the north entrance, of the VICEROY'S HOUSE. D. The east elevation of the Viceroy's original House. Actually the chattris are not surmounted by spikes, and the dome is smaller.



C



D



A. The shaft of the Cobra Fountain in the South Fountain Court. B. Section through a turret of the dome to the Durbar Hall in the VICEROY'S HOUSE.

THE VICEROY'S GARDEN.

Of the garden itself, some 12 acres in extent—of its maze of grass squares, flower-beds, and bridged waters at different levels, all framed in the red stone; of its fountains like heaps of pennies; of its exquisite red and white gazebos, whose pierced panels are repeated in the water beside them; of the terraced battlements of flowers that rise like bastions on either side; of the stone Eiffel towers at the ends, bound in flashing brass and awaiting the growth of trees inside them; of the stone hoops along the further boundary; of the stone pergola in the corridor beyond; and of the final circular enclosure attached to the corridor as a racquet to its handle—many pages could be written, and will be elsewhere. The general effect, at present, is bare; but in ten years the existing trees will have become a forest. The design, like the elaborate and formal water-systems of the Moguls and the Italians, is strictly architectural, and is thus made the instrument of a logical transition between the great house behind and the rough landscape overlooked. But this process is not accomplished by that alone. For out in the landscape itself lie, on one side, the Viceroy's stables, and on the other, the Viceroy's bodyguard lines: complicated and symmetrical groups of buildings, having towers at their ends, and so planned, diamond-wise, as to accentuate their diagonal relation to the central axis—the axis which persists from the Memorial Arch at the foot of the King's Way to the centre of the garden's final pond in the circular enclosure beyond the corridor. Thus, if the Viceroy steps out to pick a rose, he can look up to find the very horizon in deferential alignment with himself. Such is a proper setting for a ruler. But the architect has given his heart to the pansies as well. Throughout every detail of the garden is visible the same consummate manipulation of stone as distinguishes the whole city. And even the flowers have responded to their environment of perfection.

A

B

C

The facing page.

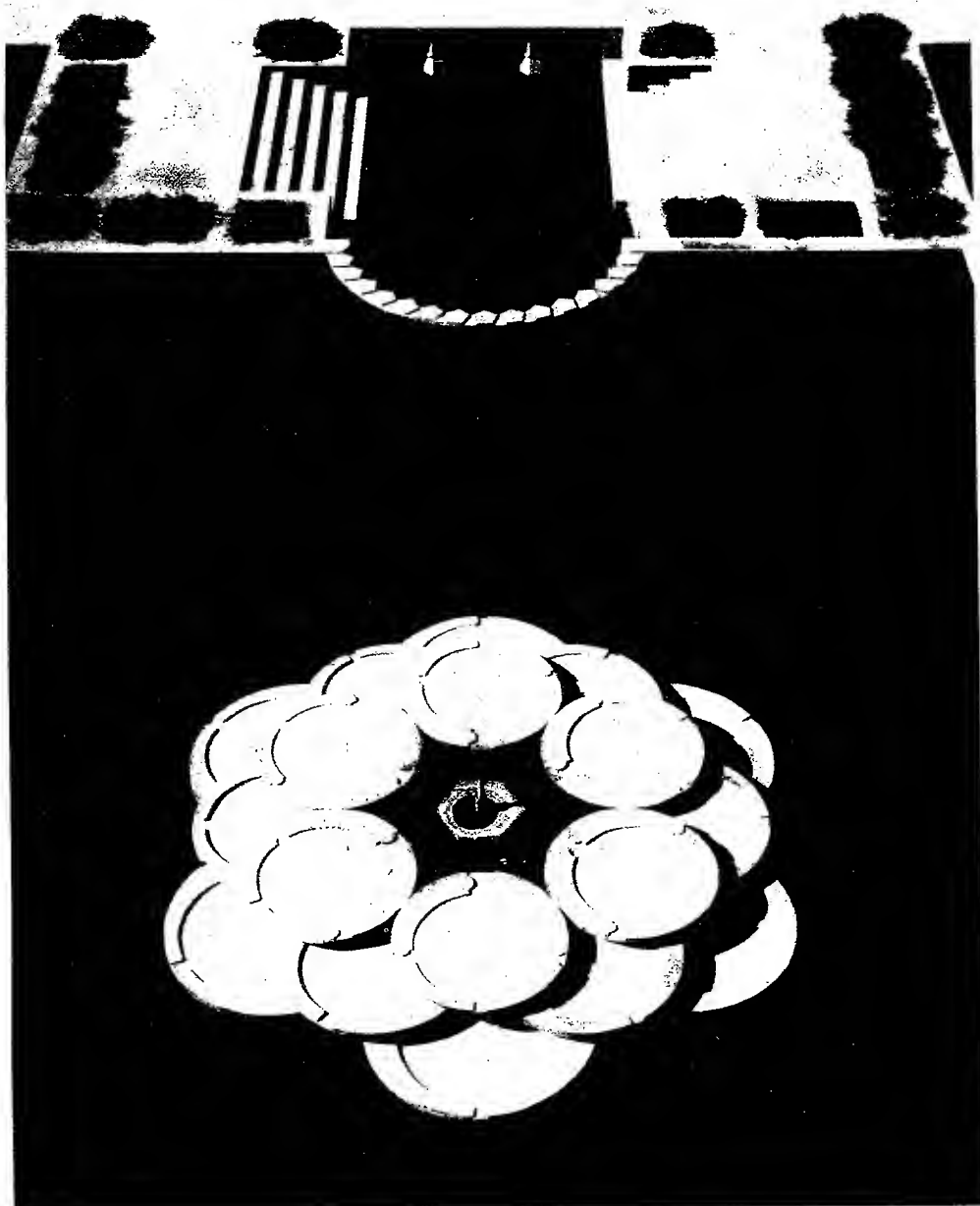
Plate XIII. January 1931.

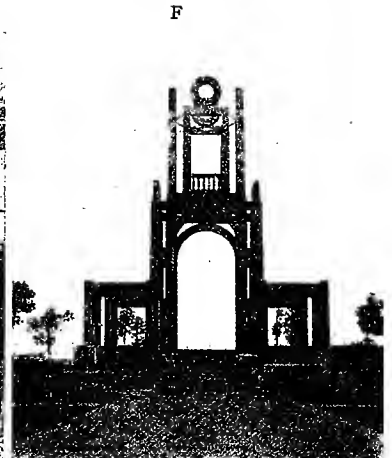
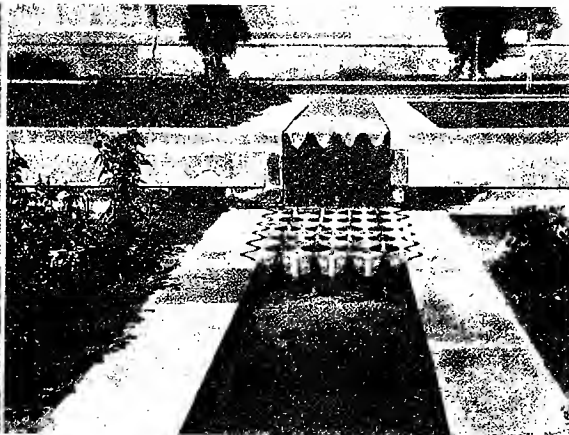
A fountain in the Viceroy's Garden viewed from above.

THE VICEROY'S GARDEN.—A. Overlooking the Delhi plain with the stables in the distance planned on a radial from the main axis of the city. B. A gazebo in red stone with a white roof. C. Stone hoops for creepers.

On page 29.

D. A stone pergola. The pendula take the weight of the middle beam, as it was impossible to get stone beams long enough to support the whole structure. E. A waterfall. F. A bosquet to contain a tree.





THE VICEROY'S HOUSE: INSIDE.

Of the inside of the Viceroy's House, I can give only the bewildered impression of a single afternoon. The Viceroy's staff, angry at being where they did not use to be, complained of its size and intricacy. But those who have made a technical study of comparable houses, the great palaces of France and Italy, built to receive a vast concourse of servants, functionaries, and ceremonial observances, assert that, for ingenuity of planning, this residence has no rival, ancient or modern. The Viceroy's living-rooms are on the ground floor, giving directly on to the garden; panelled in teak and adorned with tall, flat overmantels of white, grey, and black marble inlaid in chevron pattern. On the first floor are the State-rooms, still, when I saw them, almost empty of furniture. Even had they been totally devoid of all decoration whatsoever, the magnificence and perfection of their proportions must have given unbounded pleasure. But when these proportions, worthy of the double-cube at Wilton or the gallery at Hardwicke, are clothed with crust and ornament of Byzantine splendour, the beholder may well believe that the world of President Wilson and Mr. Ford is safe for aristocracy after all.

In the centre of the house, beneath the dome, is the Durbar Hall, also round, supported on columns of jasper blocks, ceiled with a flood-lit dome,¹ and floored

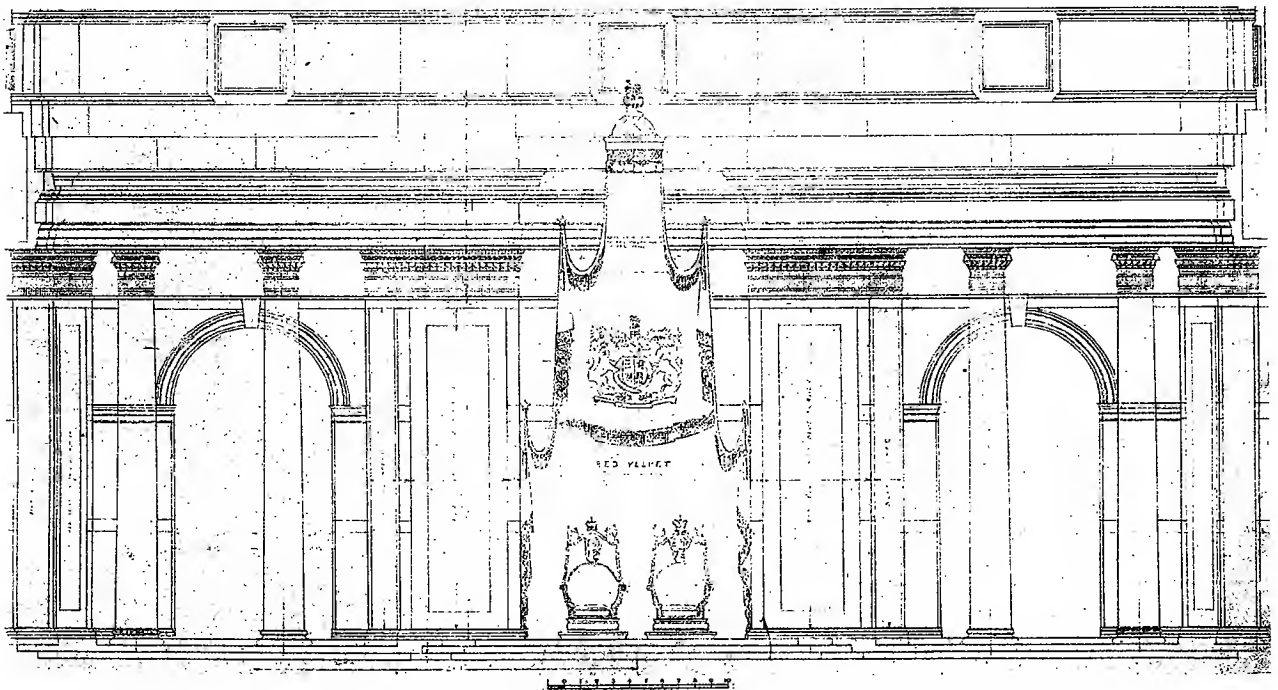
with an immense pattern of porphyry and white marble, whose glass polish reflects the jasper. This floor, typical of those in all the State-rooms, gives meaning to its name. It is the foundation of the room, not a mere texture for the feet. Actually, the red stone is not porphyry. Nor is the green stone in the other floors verde antique. But the architect's meaning is plain, and his pattern so downright, that he has changed the water into wine. Unfortunately, the workmanship is coarse in places. Indian masons have not been able to imitate that of Antiquity and the Renaissance in the same province.

Other rooms have left impressions on the mind; the State dining-room, scarcely smaller (so it seemed) than the Waterloo Chamber at Windsor, panelled in teak, and resolving, at the end, into a tall teak niche for the reception of the Goldsmiths' plate; the square ballroom, of white marble inlaid with immense panels of dark, wine-coloured glass, sufficient for a thousand

¹ This dome is destined to be frescoed by Indian artists, a fraternity who, while anxious to retain or revive the individual character of Indian art, think to combine its ideal of formal repose with the pulsing naturalism of the Western art-school. In place of intellectual understanding, they feel only a sentimental affinity with the past. Their paintings thus exhale a cheap mysticism, a quality which, cheap or not, was unknown to an art whose major virtue lay in its exquisite precision of statement. May we suggest to the Public Works Department that here is a justifiable field for economy?

guests; the apartment whose window discloses the portentous marble posterior of the Queen's coiffure; and the long drawing-room, again marble, diversified with panels of dull gold brocade and lit from silver sconces. All the details, such as the gilt keys and the door-locks in the form of the royal arms, have the perfection of their French counterparts at the end of the eighteenth century. And almost the entire furniture has been, or is being, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens himself. Few artists can have written so complete an epitaph of themselves on one spot.

One last glory of the house must be described. Its foundations are pierced, on the east and south, by five vaulted carriage-drives, one beside the other, which deposit the arriving guests at the foot of a palatial staircase running round three sides of a well. Above the cornice of the well, the casual eye thinks to discern a coved plaster ceiling. It does and does not. For the cove is there, while the ceiling is absent. Instead of a central plaster panel, there appears the sky, which is interrupted on one side by the looming red, cream, and copper mass of the dome. At night the cove is defined by a dull flood-light. While above the ascending guests, English and Indian, uniformed and starred, white-shouldered or shrouded in stuffs of liquid gold; above the most renowned jewels, the highest lineage, and the most exigent bureaucracy in Asia, the stars twinkle from a black void and the breeze blows in and out.



Detail of the baldachino in the Durbar Hall of the VICEROY'S HOUSE. Notice the stone bells on the pillar capitals.

IV.—The Significance of Lutyens's City.

Geoffrey Scott, referring to the early part of the nineteenth century, writes in his *Architecture of Humanism*: "A romantic classicism of sentiment and reflection has overlaid and stifled the creative classicism which sprang up in the *quattrocento* and till now had held control. In imparting to the Renaissance tradition this literary flavour, in adopting this unprecedentedly imitative manner, the vigour of the Renaissance style was finally and fatally injured"; and again: "The exactitudes of taste, the trained and organized discrimination which, in the collapse of the old order (at the beginning of the nineteenth century), men had indubitably lost, were declared to be of less service in framing a right judgment of architecture than the moral delicacy they conceived themselves to have acquired. From the fact that the sculptures of the village church have, or once had, an intelligible interest for the peasant, it is argued that all architecture should address itself to the level of his understanding."

The significance of Lutyens's New Delhi, for those of the human race who concern themselves with the arts, is that it marks the end, and is the first cycle of buildings to do so, of the phase described by Geoffrey Scott. American skyscrapers and Viennese workmen's dwellings have already claimed to do this. But their industrial forms, if considered impartially, are really no less allusive, though certainly more refreshing, than the floral detail of nineteenth-century Gothic. New Delhi, in its province, has revived the permanent verity of humanism.

Humanism is aristocratic; the cult of the best. In former times, this cult received universal homage. Today, when the vulgar must have not only a finger in every pie, but an opinion on every savoury, the ideal of quantity has replaced that of quality. The best is thought impossible. But since, comparatively speaking, it was attained in the past, the past is now believed, in the realm of art, to hold a monopoly of everything that is best. Hence the vulgar taste for allusion, reminiscence, and sentiment in art, the craving for moral reminders of past excellence and present devotion to unspontaneous past ideals. The present has lost confidence in its own æsthetic capacity. And with that confidence, it has lost also the joy of search for the best and pursuit of the beauty of the world, which is humanism. A few of the attenuated muses, hidden from the democracy that hates them, are beginning to find sustenance again. But architecture cannot be hidden. And her spirit, clothed in toque and feathers of moral romance, remains a grinning skull.

In 1911, Sir Edwin Lutyens, at once architect and humanist, but fettered (so it seems to many) by the powerful and admirable tradition of eighteenth-century building in

his own country, was commissioned to design a city in Asia. Before him lay an arid plain; above, a fierce sun and a blue sky; near by, the ghost of an ancient imperial capital; and on every side a people who, from prince to coolie woman, possess an innate and living desire for what is proper and best. Behind him stood an imposing political organization, a superb product of the European genius. The mainspring of this organization must be housed. Its housing must be both convenient and magnificent.

Like all humanists, Sir Edwin Lutyens had drunk of the European past, and he now drank of the Indian. He borrowed themes and inventions from both. But he used them as Beethoven used snatches of popular songs in his symphonies, or Shakespeare old legends in his plays.

In so doing, he has accomplished a fusion between East and West, and created a novel work of art. But the fusion between East and West is only incidentally one of architectural motives. It is a fusion also of tastes, comforts, and conceptions of beauty, in different climates. The Mogul Emperors, behind their gorgeous façades, lived in rooms like housemaids' closets—though set with pearls and rubies. Lutyens has combined the gorgeous façade, coloured and dramatic, of Asia, with the solid habit, cubic and intellectual, of European building. Taking the best of East and West, bests which are complementary, he has made of them a unity, and invested it with a double magnificence. That his scheme will ever be haunted by the ghosts of lost possibilities, is a tragedy which he shares with all the great architects of history.

But above all, in every rib and moulding, in every block of stone, he has revealed and given life that perfectly balanced sanity and proportion which is the distilled essence of beauty, and which Europe calls the humanist ideal. Sometimes, even, he has shouted for joy in his earth, conjuring rays from a dome, fountains from a roof, a glass star from a column, and smoke from an arch.

Geoffrey Scott, addressing those who term the baroque style of architecture ostentatious, asks if they find ostentation in the shout of an army. "Other architectures," he says, "by other men, have conveyed strength in repose. . . . But the laughter of strength is expressed in one style only; the Italian baroque architecture of the seventeenth century." New Delhi has caught the echo of that laughter. It peals over the land, mitigating for those who hear it, the steel fury of the sun and the tragedy of conflicting effort. But those who hear it are few. The majority are deaf to all but the "rights of man"—whether to give or to withhold them. They forget that one of those rights is beauty. This at least the English have given. And for this at least the English will be remembered.

